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A HISTORY
OF
OUR OWN TIMES

FOURTH VOLUME

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LONDON

A HISTORY

OF

OUR OWN TIMES

FROM THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA
TO THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1880

BY

JUSTIN McCARTHY

IN FOUR VOLUMES—VOL. IV.

A NEW EDITION

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS
1901

PREFACE

TO

THE FOURTH VOLUME.

I HAVE A STRONG OBJECTION to the time-honoured practice among authors of addressing their readers directly at the opening or close of a work with some explanatory remarks, in the form of preface or epilogue or other such appeal. It has always seemed to me that if the book does not tell its own story and make its purpose clear, the author's personal explanations will not much help the matter. I therefore now only venture to address my readers because I wish to mention one or two facts which concern others and not myself.

In describing the defence of Silistria, at the opening of the Crimean War (page 294 of my second volume), I paid a tribute to the brilliant services rendered by Captain Butler of the Ceylon Rifles, and Lieutenant Nasmyth of the East India Company's service. The name of Lieutenant J. A. Ballard, of the Bombay Engineers, now General Ballard, C.B., R.E., should always be associated with the names of Butler

and Nasmyth in that gallant defence. Ballard, on his way home from India on sick leave, was attracted by the events then going on in Turkey ; he turned aside from his homeward journey, threw himself into Silistria, shared in the perils and the glory of the defence, and kept it up after Butler had died in his arms.

My friend Mr. P. J. Smyth, M.P., has shown me that I was mistaken in supposing that Mr. Smith O'Brien disapproved of the plan adopted for the escape of John Mitchel from Van Diemen's Land. I took my impression from the statement made, and repeated several times at long intervals, by Lord Palmerston, in the House of Commons. As far as I then knew, the statement was never contradicted. Mr. Smyth has shown me that Smith O'Brien himself emphatically contradicted it. A public dinner was given to Mr. O'Brien in Melbourne in 1854, and Mr. O'Brien on that occasion expressed his entire approval of the manner of Mr. Mitchel's escape, and declared that his only reason for not adopting it himself was that 'I was not prepared to take a step which would have rendered it impossible for me to return to Ireland.' I think it right to call special attention to this fact, as I am sure it will be new to the vast majority of readers, and will correct a belief almost universal, in England at least, and perhaps even in Ireland.

I have received many valuable suggestions from correspondents whom I know, and whom I do not

know, with regard to this work. Various inaccuracies and defects have been pointed out to me. I have carefully considered every suggestion, and have supplied deficiencies and corrected errors as far as I could. I cordially thank the public and the critics for the generous reception they have given to my book. It has had, through critics and readers, a success such as I had never allowed myself to expect.

JUSTIN McCARTHY.

August 1880.

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A HISTORY
OF
OUR OWN TIMES.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

Lord Russell was invited by the Queen to form a Government after the death of Lord Palmerston. For a few days a certain amount of doubt and speculation prevailed in London and the country generally. It was thought not impossible that, owing to his advanced years, Lord Russell might prove unwilling to take on him the burthen of such an office as that of Prime Minister. The name of Lord Clarendon was suggested by many as that of a probable head of the new administration. Some talked of Lord Granville. Others had a strong conviction that Mr. Gladstone would himself be invited to take that commanding position in name which he must have in fact. Even when it became certain that Lord Russell was to be the Prime Minister, speculation busied itself as to possible changes in the administration. Many persuaded themselves that the opportunity would be

taken to make some bold and sweeping changes, and to admit the Radical element to an influence in the actual councils of the nation such as it had never enjoyed before, and such as its undoubted strength in Parliament and the country now entitled it to have. According to some rumours, Mr. Bright was to become Secretary for India in the new Cabinet; according to others, the great free trade orator was to hold the office of President of the Board of Trade, which had once been offered to his friend Mr. Cobden; and Mr. Mill was to be made Secretary for India. It was soon found, however, that no such novelties were to be announced. The only changes in the Cabinet were that Lord Russell became Prime Minister, and that Lord Clarendon, who had been Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, succeeded him as Foreign Secretary. One or two new men were brought into offices which did not give a seat in the Cabinet. Among these were Mr. Forster, who became Under Secretary for the Colonies in the room of Mr. Chichester Fortescue, now Irish Secretary, and Mr. Goschen, who succeeded Mr. Hutt as Vice-President of the Board of Trade. Both Mr. Forster and Mr. Goschen soon afterwards came to hold high official position, and to have seats in the Cabinet. In each instance the appointment was a concession to the growing Liberal feeling of the day; but the concession was slight and cautious. The country knew little about either Mr. Forster or Mr. Goschen at the time; and it will easily be imagined that those who thought a seat in the Cabinet for Mr. Bright was

due to the people more even than to the man, and who had some hopes of seeing a similar place offered to Mr. Mill, were not satisfied by the arrangement which called two comparatively obscure men to unimportant office. The outer public did not quite appreciate the difficulties which a Liberal minister had to encounter in compromising between the Whigs and the Radicals. The Whigs included almost all the members of the party who were really influential by virtue of hereditary rank and noble station. It was impossible to overlook their claims. In a country like England one must pay attention to the wishes of 'the Dukes.' There is a superstition about it. The man who attempted to form a Liberal Cabinet without consulting the wishes of 'the Dukes,' would be as imprudent as the Greek commander who in the days of Xenophon would venture on a campaign without consulting the auguries. But it was not only a superstition which required the Liberal Prime Minister to show deference to the claims of the titled and stately Whigs. The great Whig names were a portion of the traditions of the party. More than that, it was certain that whenever the Liberal party got into difficulties, it would look to the great Whig houses to help it out. Many Liberals began to speak with more or less contempt of the Whigs. They talked of these shadows of a mighty name as Thackeray's Barnes Newcome talks of the senior members of his family, his uncle more particularly. But when the Liberal party fell into disorganisation and difficulty some years after, the influence of

the great Whig houses was sought for at once in order to bring about an improved condition of things. Liberalism often turns to the Whigs as a young scapegrace to his father or his guardian. The wild youth will have his own way when things are going smooth; when credit is still good, and family affection is not particularly necessary to his comfort. He is even ready enough to smile at old-fashioned ways and antiquated counsels; but when the hour of pressure comes, when obligations have to be met at last, and the gay bachelor lodgings with the fanciful furniture and the other expensive luxuries have to be given up, then he comes without hesitation to the elder, and assumes as a matter of course that his debts are to be paid and his affairs put in order.

Lord Russell had to pay some deference to the authority of the great Whig houses. Some of them probably looked with alarm enough at the one serious change brought about by the death of Lord Palmerston: the change which made Mr. Gladstone leader of the House of Commons. Meanwhile there were some changes in the actual condition of things which did not depend on the mere alteration of a Cabinet. The political complexion of the day was likely to be affected in its colour by some of these changes. The House of Commons, elected just before Lord Palmerston's death, was in many respects a very different House from that which it had been his last ministerial act to dissolve. We have already mentioned some of the changes that death had made. Palmerston was gone, and Cobden, and Sir George Lewis,

and Sidney Herbert, and Sir James Graham. There were changes, too, not brought about by death. The Lord John Russell of the Reform Bill had been made a Peer, and sat as Earl Russell in the House of Lords. Mr. Lowe, one of the ablest and keenest of political critics, who had for a while been shut down under the responsibilities of office, was a free lance once more. Mr. Lowe, who had before that held office two or three times, was Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education from the beginning of Lord Palmerston's administration until April, 1864. At that time a vote of censure was carried against his department, in other words against himself, on the motion of Lord Robert Cecil for alleged 'mutilation' of the reports of the Inspectors of Schools, done, as it was urged, in order to bring the reports into seeming harmony with the educational views entertained by the Committee of Council. Lord Robert Cecil introduced the resolution in a speech singularly bitter and offensive. The motion was carried by a majority of 101 to 93. Mr. Lowe instantly resigned his office; but he did not allow the matter to rest there. He obtained the appointment of a committee to enquire into the whole subject; and the result of the enquiry was not only that Mr. Lowe was entirely exonerated from the charge made against him, but that the resolution of the House of Commons was actually rescinded. It is probable, however, that Mr. Lowe felt that the Government of which he was a member had not given him all the support he might have expected. It is certain that

if Lord Palmerston and his leading colleagues had thrown any great energy into their support of him the vote of censure never could have been carried, and would not have had to be rescinded. This fact was brought back to the memory of many not long after, when Mr. Lowe, still an outsider, became the very Coriolanus of a sudden movement against the Reform policy of a Liberal Government. The vigil of him who treasures up a wrong, if we suppose Mr. Lowe to have had any such feeling, had not to be very long or patient in this instance. On the other hand, Mr. Layard, once a daring and somewhat reckless opponent of Government and governments, a very Drawcansir of political debate, a swashbuckler and soldado of Parliamentary conflict, had been bound over to the peace, quietly enmeshed in the discipline of subordinate office. Not Michael Peres himself, the 'Copper Captain' of Beaumont and Fletcher, underwent a more remarkable and sudden change when the strong-willed Estifania once had him fast in wedlock, than many a bold and dashing free lance submits to when he has consented to put himself into the comfortable bondmanship of subordinate office. Mr. Layard was therefore now to be regarded as one subdued in purpose. He seemed what Byron called an 'extinct volcano:' a happy phrase more lately adopted by Lord Beaconsfield. Yet the volcanic fire was not wholly gone; it flamed up again on opportunity given. Perhaps Mr. Layard proved most formidable to his own colleagues, when he sometimes had to come into the ring to sus-

tain their common cause. The old vigour of the professional gladiator occasionally drove him a little too heedlessly against the Opposition. So combative a temperament found it hard to submit itself always to the prosaic rigour of mere fact, and the proprieties of official decorum.

The change in the leadership of the House of Commons was of course the most remarkable, and the most momentous, of the alterations that had taken place. From Lord Palmerston, admired almost to hero-worship by Whigs and Conservatives, the foremost position had suddenly passed to Mr. Gladstone, whose admirers were the most extreme of the Liberals, and who was distrusted and dreaded by all of Conservative instincts and sympathies, on the one side of the House as well as on the other. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli were now brought directly face to face. One led the House; the other led the Opposition. With so many points of difference, and even of contrast, there was one slight resemblance in the political situation of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli. Each was looked on with a certain doubt and dread by a considerable number of his own followers. It is evident that in such a state of things the strategical advantage lay with the leader of Opposition. He had not to take the initiative in anything, and the least loyal of his followers would cordially serve under him in any effort to thwart a movement made by the Ministry. The Conservatives naturally have always proved the more docile and easily disciplined party. Of late years their policy has necessarily been

of a negative character: a policy of resistance or of delay. There is less opportunity for difference of opinion in a party acting with such a purpose than in one of which the principle is to keep pace with changing times and conditions. It came to be seen, however, before long that the Conservative leader was able to persuade his party to accept those very changes against which some of the followers of Mr. Gladstone were found ready to revolt. In order that some of the events to follow may not appear very mysterious, it is well to bear in mind that the formation of the new ministry under Lord Russell had by no means given all the satisfaction to certain sections of the Liberal party which they believed themselves entitled to expect. Some were displeased because the new Government was not Radical enough. Some were alarmed because they fancied it was likely to go too far for the purpose of pleasing the Radicals. Some were vexed because men whom they looked up to as their natural leaders had not been invited to office. A few were annoyed because their own personal claims had been overlooked. One thing was certain: the Government must make a distinct move of some kind in the direction of Reform. So many new and energetic Liberals and Radicals had entered the House of Commons now that it would be impossible for any Liberal Government to hold office on the terms which had of late been conceded to Lord Palmerston. Mr. Gladstone had always been credited with a sensitive earnestness of temper which was commonly believed to have given trouble to his more worldly and easy-

going colleagues in the Cabinet of Lord Palmerston. He had what Condorcet has happily called an impatient spirit. It was to many people a problem of deep interest to see whether the genius of Mr. Gladstone would prove equal to the trying task of leadership under circumstances of such peculiar difficulty. Tact, according to many, was the quality needed for the work—not genius.

Some new men were coming up on both sides of the political field. They were needed. Many conspicuous figures during former years of debate would be missed when the new Parliament came to meet. Among the new men we have already mentioned Mr. Forster, who had taken a conspicuous part in the debates on the American Civil War. Mr. Forster was a man of considerable Parliamentary aptitude; a debater, who though not pretending to eloquence, was argumentative, vigorous, and persuasive. He had practical knowledge of English politics and social affairs, and was thoroughly representative of a very solid body of English public opinion. In the House of Lords the Duke of Argyll was beginning to take a prominent and even a leading place. The Duke of Argyll was still looked upon as a young man in politics. Nothing can be more curious than the manner in which the landmarks of youth and age have of late years been re-arranged in our political life. What would be regarded as approaching to middle-age in ordinary society is now held to be little better than unfledged youth in Parliamentary life. It is doubtful whether any advantages of family influence or per-

sonal capacity could in our day enable men to lead a House or a party at the age when Pitt and Fox were accepted political chiefs. Human life should indeed have stretched out almost to what are called patriarchal limits in order to give a political leader now an opportunity of enjoying a fairly proportionate tenure of leadership. The Duke of Argyll would have passed as a middle-aged man in ordinary life, but he was looked on by many as a sort of boy in politics. He had, indeed, begun life very soon. At this time he was some forty-three years of age, and he had been a prominent public man for more than twenty years. Lord Houghton, in proposing his health at a public dinner some years ago, said good-humouredly that 'the Duke was only seventeen years old'—(he was in fact nineteen)—'when he wrote a pamphlet called "Advice to the Peers," and he has gone on advising us ever since.' Pursuing the career of his friend, Lord Houghton went on to say that 'soon after he got mixed up with ecclesiastical affairs, and was excommunicated.' The ecclesiastical controversy in which the Duke of Argyll engaged so early was the famous struggle concerning the freedom of the Church of Scotland, which resulted in the great secession headed by Dr. Chalmers, and the foundation of the Free Church. Into this controversy the Duke of Argyll, then Marquis of Lorne, rushed with all the energy of Scottish youth, but in it he maintained himself with a good deal of the proverbial Scottish caution. Dr. Chalmers welcomed the young controversialist as an able and important adherent. But the Marquis of Lorne

was not prepared to follow the great divine and orator into actual secession. The heirs to dukedoms in Great Britain seldom go very far in the way of dissent. The Marquis declined to accept the doctrine of Chalmers, that lay patronage and the spiritual independence of the Church were 'like oil and water, immiscible.' The Free Church movement went on, and the young Marquis drew back. He subsequently vindicated his course, and reviewed the whole question in an essay on the ecclesiastical history of Scotland.

Meanwhile the young controversialist had become Duke of Argyll, on the death of his father in 1847. He did battle in the House of Lords as he had done out of it. He distinguished himself by plunging almost instantaneously into the thick of debate. He very much astonished the staid and formal peers, who had been accustomed to discussion conducted in measured tones, and with awful show of deference to age and political standing. The Duke of Argyll spoke upon any and every subject with astonishing fluency, and without the slightest reverence for years and authority. The general impression of the House of Lords for a long time was that youthful audacity, and nothing else, was the chief characteristic of the Duke of Argyll; and for a long time the Duke of Argyll did a good deal to support that impression. He had the temerity before he had been very long in the House to make a sharp personal attack upon Lord Derby. The peers were as much astonished as the spectators round the tilt-yard in 'Ivanhoe,' when they saw the

strange young knight strike with his lance's point the shield of the formidable Templar. Lord Derby himself was at first almost bewildered by the unexpected vehemence of his inexperienced opponent. But he soon made up his mind, and bore down upon the Duke of Argyll with all the force of scornful invective which he could summon to his aid. For the hour the Duke of Argyll was as completely overthrown as if he had got in the way of a charge of cavalry. He was in a metaphorical sense left dead on the field. Elderly peers smiled gravely, shook their heads, said they knew how it would be, and congratulated themselves that there was an end of the audacious young debater. But they were quite mistaken. The Duke of Argyll knew of course that he had been soundly beaten, but he did not care. He got up again, and went on just as if nothing had happened. His courage was not broken; his self-confidence moulted no feather. After a while he began to show that there was in him more than self-confidence. The House of Lords found that he really knew a great deal, and had a wonderfully clear head, and they learned to endure his dogmatic and professorial ways; but he never grew to be popular amongst them. His style was far too self-assured; his faith in his own superiority to everybody else was too evident to allow of his having many enthusiastic admirers. He soon, however, got into high office. With his rank, his talents, and his energy, such a thing was inevitable. He joined the Government of Lord Aberdeen in 1852 as Lord Privy Seal, holding

an office of dignity, but no special duties, the occupant of which has only to give his assistance in council and general debate. He was afterwards Postmaster-General for two or three years. Under Lord Palmerston, in 1859, he became Lord Privy Seal again, and he retained that office in the Cabinet of Lord Russell.

Mr. Stansfeld was believed to be one of the rising men of the day. He was an advanced Radical, especially known for his sympathies with the movements and the cause of the more energetic of the Italian leaders. He had made a speech during one of the Reform debates of 1860 which called forth a high compliment from Mr. Disraeli, who was always ready to welcome new ability and promise on whatever side it displayed itself. He had proposed a resolution in favour of reduction of expenditure, when Lord Palmerston was most active in swelling the war costs of the country. The resolution was well supported, and apparently had a fair chance of success, until Lord Palmerston contrived to alarm the House with the idea that if he did not get his way he would resign, and in the eyes of not a few members the resignation of Lord Palmerston appeared to be much the same thing as the coming again of chaos. Mr. Stansfeld, however, became a person of a certain political importance, and in 1863 Lord Palmerston invited him to take office as one of the Lords of the Admiralty. While he held that office an incident occurred which gave rise to a controversy of rather a curious nature. A plot was discovered in Paris for the as-

sassination of the Emperor of the French. The French Government believed, or said they believed, that Mazzini was connected with the plot. Mazzini was a close friend of Mr. Stansfeld, and it appeared was in the habit of having his private letters sent for him under a feigned name to Mr. Stansfeld's house. At the trial of the accused men in Paris, it was stated by the Procureur-Impérial in his speech, that a paper had been found in the possession of one of the prisoners authorising him to write for money to 'Mr. Flowers,' at the address of Mr. Stansfeld, in London. Now it seemed that Mazzini's letters were sometimes addressed to him as Mr. 'Fiori,' or Flowers. After what we have already told in this history concerning the opening of Mazzini's letters in the Post Office here, it is not very surprising that Mazzini should prefer not to have his letters addressed to his own name. On these facts, however, some members of the House of Commons, Liberals as well as Tories, got up a sort of charge against Mr. Stansfeld. Not that any man in his senses seriously believed that Mr. Stansfeld had anything to do with an assassination plot; nor, indeed, that there was any evidence to show that Mazzini was acquainted with the peculiar designs of the accused persons in this case. Still it seemed a good chance for an attack on the Ministry, through Mr. Stansfeld; and no one could deny that there was a certain amount of indiscretion, not to say impropriety, in Mr. Stansfeld's good-natured arrangement with Mazzini. A man holding ministerial office, however subordinate, is not warranted

in allowing his house to be the receptacle of secret letters for one engaged, like Mazzini, in revolutionary plots against established governments. Mr. Stansfeld felt himself called on to resign his office; and Lord Palmerston, though at first he politely pressed him to reconsider the resolve, consented after a while to accept the resignation. Mr. Stansfeld, however, was sure to be invited to take office again, and the whole episode would probably have been soon forgotten if it were not for one odd incident. During the discussions Mr. Disraeli strongly condemned Mr. Stansfeld for his avowed friendship with Mazzini, and reminded the House of a statement made by Mr. Gallenga, an Italian politician and journalist, to the effect that Mazzini once encouraged him, then a young man of wild and extravagant notions, in a design to kill Charles Albert, King of Sardinia. Mr. Bright came to Mr. Stansfeld's defence in a very kindly and generous speech, made the more effective because of his well-known lack of sympathy with the schemes of revolutionists anywhere. He pointed out that the evidence of Mazzini's distinctly sanctioning regicide was by no means clear, and that Mr. Stansfeld might well be excused if he attached little importance to a story told of Mazzini at such a distant time. Mr. Bright went on good-humouredly to show that high-flown talk about tyrannicide was unfortunately almost a commonplace with a certain class of young rhapsodical political writers, and added that he believed there would be found in a poem called 'A Revolutionary Epick,' written by Mr. Disraeli

himself some five-and-twenty or thirty years before, certain lines of eloquent apostrophe in praise of the slaying of tyrants. Mr. Disraeli rose at once, and with some warmth denied that any such sentiment, or any words suggesting it, could be found in the poem. Mr. Bright, of course, accepted the assurance. He explained that he had never seen the poem himself, but had been positively informed that it contained such a passage, and he withdrew the statement with a handsome apology. Everyone supposed the matter would have dropped there. The 'Revolutionary Epick' was a piece of metrical bombast, published by Mr. Disraeli a generation before, and forgotten by almost all the living. Mr. Disraeli, however, declared that he attached great importance to the charge made against him, and that he felt bound to refute it by more than a mere denial. He, therefore, published a new edition of the poem, which he dedicated to Lord Stanley, in order to settle the controversy. 'I have, therefore, thought it,' he explains, 'the simplest course, and one which might save me trouble hereafter, to publish the "Revolutionary Epick." It is printed from the only copy in my possession, and which, with slight exceptions, was corrected in 1837, when after three years' reflection I had resolved not only to correct, but to complete the work. The corrections are purely literary.' The poem thus republished seemed more a literary curiosity than a work of art. It had a preface which was positively grotesque in its grandiloquence. 'It was on the plains of Troy,' the writer informed the

world, 'that I first conceived the idea of this work.' On that interesting spot it seems to have occurred to him for the first time that 'the most heroick incident of an heroick age produced in the Iliad an Heroick Epick; thus the consolidation of the most superb of empires produced in the Æneid a Political Epick; the revival of learning and the birth of vernacular genius presented us in the Divine Comedy with a National Epick; and the Reformation and its consequences called from the rapt lyre of Milton a Religious Epick.' Then the author naturally was led to ask, should the spirit of his time 'alone be uncelebrated?' As naturally came the answer, that the spirit of Mr. Disraeli's time ought to be celebrated; and that Mr. Disraeli was the man to celebrate it. 'Standing upon Asia and gazing upon Europe,' the inspiration descended on him. 'For me,' he exclaimed, 'remains the Revolutionary Epick.' There was so much of the youth, not to say of the schoolboy, in these bursts of extraordinary eloquence, that no one could have thought of making any serious accusation against Mr. Disraeli in his graver days, even if the pages of such a poem had been enlivened by some nonsense about tyrannicide. The work, as reprinted, certainly contained no passage to show that the young writer entertained any such opinions. Unfortunately, however, it was found that in the republication the questionable passages had somehow undergone a process of alteration. Very few copies of the original edition were in existence. But the British Museum treasured one, and from this it was found

that the new version was not quite the same as the original. Thus in the new edition, published specially for the purpose of repelling the charge about tyrannicide, the lines about Brutus were very harmless :—

> Rome's strong career
> Was mine; the blow bold Brutus struck, her fate.

But in the original edition it ran thus to a much more audacious note :—

> The spirit of her strong career was mine;
> And the bold Brutus but propelled the blow
> Her own and nature's laws alike approved.

There were other slight modifications, too, into which it is not necessary to enter. Enough has been said to show that by what we must suppose to have been some unlucky accident, Mr. Disraeli came to publish as a final and complete refutation of the charge founded upon his 'Revolutionary Epick,' a version of that work which was altered from the original in several passages, and in the passage most important of all. We have spoken of a charge made against Mr. Disraeli; but that is giving by far too serious a name to the good-humoured statement made by Mr. Bright. Neither Mr. Bright, nor anyone else, supposed for a moment that Mr. Disraeli ever seriously approved of regicide. Neither Mr. Bright, nor anyone else, would have thought of holding Mr. Disraeli gravely responsible for some youthful rhodomontades published in a forgotten attempt at poetry. All that Mr. Bright apparently meant to say was : 'Don't be

too rigid in censuring the incautious utterances of men's early and foolish years. Did not you yourself, in a poem published thirty years ago, talk some nonsense about nature's approval of tyrannicide?' The only seriousness given to the matter was when Mr. Disraeli published the new edition for the purpose of finally repudiating the charge, and the new edition was found to have the peculiar passages altered. That was unlucky. If Mr. Disraeli printed from the only copy in his possession, and which he had corrected after three years' reflection, it still was a pity he did not leave the disputed passages uncorrected, or restore them to their original shape. The question was not whether after three years' reflection Mr. Disraeli was entitled to alter in 1837 what he had published in 1834. The question was only as to what he had published in 1834. Nor is it easy to understand how, considering what the controversy was about, he could have regarded the corrections as purely literary. We are bound to say, however, that the incident did Mr. Disraeli no particular harm. The English public has always been curiously unwilling to take Mr. Disraeli seriously. The great majority laughed at the whole thing, and made no further account of it.

There were some rising men on the Tory side. Sir Hugh Cairns, afterwards Lord Chancellor and a peer, had fought his way by sheer talent and energy into the front rank of Opposition. A lawyer from Belfast, and the son of middle-class parents, he had risen into celebrity and influence while yet he was in the

very prime of life. He was a lawyer whose knowledge of his own craft might fairly be called profound. He was one of the most effective debaters in Parliament. His resources of telling argument were almost inexhaustible, and his training at the bar gave him the faculty of making the best at the shortest notice of all the facts he was able to bring to bear on any question of controversy. He showed more than once that he was capable of pouring out an animated and even a passionate invective. An orator in the highest sense he certainly was not. No gleam of imagination softened or brightened his lithe and nervous logic. No deep feeling animated and inspired it. His speeches were arguments not eloquence; instruments not literature. But he was on the whole the greatest political lawyer since Lyndhurst; and he was probably a sounder lawyer than Lyndhurst. He had above all things skill and discretion. He could do much for the aboriginal Tories, if we may use such a word, which they could not do of or for themselves; and his appearance in the front rank of Conservatism made it much more formidable than it was before. Like Mr. Disraeli himself, however, Sir Hugh Cairns was an imported auxiliary of Toryism. The Conservative party had always to retain their foreign legion, as the French kings had their Scottish archers, their Swiss guard, or their Irish brigade. In the House of Commons there were very few genuine English Tories capable of sustaining with Mr. Disraeli the brunt of debate. The Conservative leader's most effective adjutants were men like Sir Hugh

Cairns, an Irish lawyer; Mr. Whiteside, a voluble, eloquent, sometimes rather boisterous speaker, also an Irishman and a lawyer; Mr. Seymour Fitzgerald, a clever Irishman, who had at least been called to the bar. Sir Stafford Northcote was a man of ability, who had had an excellent financial training under no less a teacher than Mr. Gladstone himself. But Sir Stafford Northcote, although a fluent speaker, was not a great debater, and, moreover, he had but little of the genuine Tory in him. He was a man of far too modern a spirit and training to be a genuine Tory. He was not one whit more Conservative than most of the Whigs. Mr. Gathorne Hardy, afterwards Lord Cranbrook, was a man of ingrained Tory instincts rather than convictions. He was a powerful speaker of the rattling declamatory kind; fluent as the sand in an hourglass is fluent; stirring as the roll of a drum is stirring; sometimes dry as the sand and empty as the drum. A man of far higher ability and of really great promise was Lord Robert Cecil, afterwards Lord Cranborne, and now Marquis of Salisbury. Lord Robert Cecil was at this time the ablest scion of noble Toryism in the House of Commons. He was younger than Lord Stanley, and he had not Lord Stanley's solidity, caution, or political information. But he had more originality; he had brilliant ideas; he was ready in debate; and he had a positive genius for saying bitter things in the bitterest tone. The younger son of a great peer, he had at one time no apparent chance of succeeding to the title and the estates. He had accepted

honourable poverty, and was glad to help out his means by the use of his very clever pen. He wrote in several publications, it was said; especially in the *Quarterly Review*, the time-honoured and somewhat time-worn organ of Toryism; and after a while certain political articles in the *Quarterly* came to be identified with his name. He was an ultra-Tory; a Tory on principle, who would hear of no compromise. One great object of his political writings appeared to be to denounce Mr. Disraeli, his titular leader, and to warn the party against him. For a long time he was disliked by most persons in the House of Commons. His gestures were ungainly; his voice was singularly unmusical and harsh; and the extraordinary and wanton bitterness of his tongue set the ordinary listeners against him. He seemed to take a positive delight in being gratuitously offensive. One night during the session of 1862 he attacked Mr. Gladstone's financial policy, and likened it to the practice of 'a pettifogging attorney.' This was felt to be somewhat coarse, and there were many murmurs of disapprobation. Lord Robert Cecil cared as little for disapprobation or decorum as the son of Tisander in the story told by Herodotus, and he went on with his speech unheeding. Next night, when the debate was resumed, Lord Robert rose and said he feared he had on the previous evening uttered some words which might give offence, and which he felt that he could not justify. There were murmurs of encouraging applause; the House of Commons admires nothing more than an unsolicited and manly apology. He

had, Lord Robert went on to say, compared the policy of Mr. Gladstone to the practice of a pettifogging attorney. That was language which on cooler consideration he felt that he ought not to have used, and therefore he begged leave to tender his sincere apology—to the attorneys. There was something so wanton, something so nearly approaching to mere buffoonery in conduct like this, that many men found themselves unable to recognise the really high intellectual qualities that were hidden behind that curious mask of offensive cynicism. Lord Robert Cecil, therefore, although a genuine Tory, or perhaps because he was a genuine Tory, could not as yet be looked upon as a man likely to render great service to his party. He was just as likely to turn against them at some moment of political importance. He would not fall in with the discipline of the party; he would not subject his opinions or his caprices to its supposed interests. He was not made to swear in the words of the leader who then guided the party in the House of Commons. Some men on his own side of the House disliked him. Many feared him; some few admired him; no one regarded him as a trustworthy party man. At this period of its career, as at almost all others, Toryism, as a Parliamentary party, lived and won its occasional successes by the guidance and the services of brilliant outsiders. Had it been left to the leadership of genuine Tories it would probably have come to an end long before. At this particular time to which we have now conducted it, it lived and looked upon the earth, had hope of

triumph and gains, had a present and a future, only because it allowed itself to be led by men whom it sometimes distrusted; whom, according to some of its own legitimate princelings, it ought to have always disavowed.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE TROUBLES IN JAMAICA.

Demosthenes once compared the policy of the Athenians to the manner in which a barbarian boxes. When the barbarian receives a blow his attention is at once turned to the part which has got the stroke, and he hastens to defend it. When he receives another blow in another place his hand is there just too late to stop it. But he never seems to have any idea beforehand of what he is to expect or whither his attention ought to be directed. The immense variety of imperial, foreign, and colonial interests that England has got involved in compels a reader of English history, and indeed often compels an English statesman, to find himself in much the same condition as this barbarian boxer. It is impossible to know from moment to moment whither the attention will next have to be turned. Lord Russell's Government had hardly come into power before they found themselves compelled to illustrate this truth. They had scarcely been installed when it was found that some troublesome business awaited them, and that the trouble as usual had arisen in a wholly unthought-of quarter. For some weeks there was hardly anything talked of, we might almost say hardly anything thought of, in

England, but the story of the rebellion that had taken place in the island of Jamaica, and the manner in which it had been suppressed and punished. The first story came from English officers and soldiers who had themselves helped to crush or to punish the supposed rebellion. All that the public here could gather fro n the first narratives that found their way into print was, that a negro insurrection had broken out in Jamaica, and that it had been promptly crushed; but that its suppression seemed to have been accompanied by a very carnival of cruelty on the part of the soldiers and their volunteer auxiliaries. Some of the letters sent home reeked with blood. Every writer seemed anxious to accredit himself with the most monstrous deeds of cruelty. Accounts were given of *battues* of negroes as if they had been game. Englishmen told with exulting glee of the number of floggings they had ordered or inflicted; of the huts they had burnt down; of the men and women they had hanged. 'I visited,' wrote an English officer to his superior, 'several estates and villages. I burnt seven houses in all, but did not even see a rebel. On returning to Golden Grove in the evening, sixty-seven prisoners had been sent in by the Maroons. I disposed of as many as possible, but was too tired to continue after dark. On the morning of the 24th, I started for Morant Bay, having first flogged four and hung six rebels. I beg to state that I did not meet a single man upon the road up to Keith Hall; there were a few prisoners here, all of whom I flogged, and then proceeded to Johnstown and Beckford. At the

latter place I burned seven houses and one meeting-house; in the former four houses.' Another officer writes: 'We made a raid with thirty men; flogging nine men and burning their negro houses. We held a court-martial on the prisoners, who amounted to about fifty or sixty. Several were flogged without court-martial, from a simple examination.' Then the writer quietly added: 'This is a picture of martial law. The soldiers enjoy it; the inhabitants here dread it. If they run on their approach, they are shot for running away.' It will be seen that in these letters there is no question of contending with or suppressing an insurrection. The insurrection, such as it was, had been suppressed. The writers only give a description of a sort of hunting expedition among the negro inhabitants for the purpose of hanging and flogging. The soldiers are pictured as enjoying the work; the inhabitants, strange to say, are observed to dread it. Their dread would seem to have been unfortunate, although certainly not unnatural; for if they ran away at the approach of the soldiers, the soldiers shot them for their want of confidence. It also became known that a coloured member of the Jamaica House of Assembly, a man named George William Gordon, who was suspected of inciting the rebellion, and had surrendered himself at Kingston, was put on board an English war vessel there, taken to Morant Bay, where martial law had been proclaimed, tried by a sort of drumhead court-martial, and instantly hanged.

Such news naturally created a profound sensation

in England. The Aborigines' Protection Society, the Anti-Slavery Society, and other philanthropic bodies, organised a deputation, immense in its numbers, and of great influence as regarded its composition, to wait on Mr. Cardwell, Secretary for the Colonies, at the Colonial Office, and urge on him the necessity of instituting a full enquiry and re-calling Governor Eyre. The deputation was so numerous that it had to be received in a great public room, and indeed the whole scene was more like that presented by some large popular meeting than by a deputation to a minister. Mr. Cardwell was so fortunate as to discover a phrase exactly suitable to the occasion. In the course of his reply to the deputation, he laid it down that everyone must be careful not to 'prejudge' the question. It was pointed out to him that it can hardly be called prejudging if you take men's own formal and official statements of what they have done, and declare that on their own acknowledgments you are of opinion they have done wrong. The word 'prejudge' carried thousands of uncertain minds along with it. All over the country there was one easy form of protest against the proceedings of the philanthropic societies. It was apparently enough to utter the oracular words 'we must not prejudge.' Mr. Cardwell, however, did so far prejudge the case himself as to suspend Mr. Eyre temporarily from his functions as Governor, and to send out a Commission of Enquiry to investigate the whole history of the rebellion and the repression, and to report to the Government. Sir Henry Storks, a man of great ability and high reputation, both as

soldier and administrator, who had been Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, was summoned from Malta, where he was then Governor and Commander-in-Chief, to take the Governorship of Jamaica for the time, and to act as President of the Commission. He had associated with him Mr. Russell Gurney, Recorder of London, a lawyer of high standing and a distinguished member of Parliament; and Mr. J. B. Maule, Recorder of Leeds. The philanthropic associations which had taken up the question, sent out two barristers to act as counsel for the widowed Mrs. Gordon during the investigation: Mr. Gorrie, afterwards Chief Justice of the Fiji Islands, and Mr. J. Horne Payne. The Commission held a very long and careful enquiry. No one could question either the ability or the impartiality of the Commissioners. There was a general disposition to receive any report they might make as authoritative and decisive. Meanwhile, however, it need hardly be said that there was no disposition to wait for the story of all that had happened until the Commission should have got through its patient enquiries and presented its formal report. The English public have long learned to look to the newspaper press as not only the quickest, but on the whole the most accurate, source of intelligence in all matters of public interest. In this case as in most others, the newspapers differed in their judgment as to the conduct of the principal actors in the drama; but, in this case, as in all others of late years, each newspaper endeavoured to give a correct representation of the facts. Many

wild exaggerations had found their way into some newspapers. These came from private letters. It sometimes happened that men who had been engaged in putting down the insurrection, represented themselves as having done deeds of savage vengeance of which they were not really guilty. In some instances it actually turned out that Mr. Cardwell's appeal to the public not to prejudge, was warranted even where men deliberately affirmed themselves to have committed the acts which made people at home shudder and exclaim. Such seemed to have been the fervour of repression in Jamaica, that persons were found eager to claim an undue share of its honours by ascribing to themselves detestable excesses which in point of fact they had not committed. It is needless to say that there was exaggeration on the other side, and that affrighted coloured people in Jamaica sent forth wild rumours of wholesale massacre which would have been impossible, even in the high fever of repression. As the letters of the accredited correspondents of the newspapers began to arrive, the true state of affairs gradually disclosed itself. There was no substantial discrepancy as to the facts; and the report of the Commissioners themselves, when it was received, did not add much to the materials for forming a judgment which the public already possessed, nor probably did it alter many opinions of many men. The history of the events in Jamaica, told in whatever way, must form a sad and shocking narrative. The history of this generation has no such tale to tell where any race of civilised and Christian men

was concerned. Had the repression been justifiable in all its details; had the fearful vengeance taken on the wretched island been absolutely necessary to its future tranquillity, it still would have been a chapter of history to read with a shudder. It will be seen, however, that excesses were committed which could not possibly plead the excuse of necessity; that some deeds were done which most moralists would say no human authority could warrant, or human peril justify.

Jamaica had long been in a more or less disturbed condition; at least it had long been liable to periodical fits of disturbance. We have already described in this history some of the difficulties occasioned by the condition of things existing in the island. When giving an account of the Jamaica Bill during the Melbourne administration, it was mentioned that the troubles then existing were in fact a survival of the slave system. So were the troubles of 1865. 'I suppose there is no island or place in the world,' said Chief Justice Cockburn in his celebrated charge to the Grand Jury at the Central Criminal Court, in 1867, 'in which there has been so much of insurrection and disorder as the island of Jamaica. There is no place in which the curse which attaches to slavery, both as regards the master and the slave, has been more strikingly illustrated.' What we may call the planter class still continued to look on the negroes as an inferior race hardly entitled to any legal rights. The negroes were naturally only too ready to listen to any denunciations of the planter class, and to put

faith in any agitation which promised to secure them some property in the land. The negroes had undoubtedly some serious grievances. It may be that some of the wrongs they complained of were imaginary or were exaggerated. But it is a very safe rule in politics to assume that no population is ever disturbed by wholly imaginary grievances. In such cases, unquestionably, where there is smoke there is fire. Man is by far too lazy an animal to trouble himself much with agitation about purely unreal and non-existing wrongs. The negroes of Jamaica had some very substantial wrongs. They constantly complained that they could not get justice administered to them when any dispute arose between white and black. The Government had found that there was some ground for complaints of this kind at the time when it was proposed by the Jamaica Bill to suspend the constitution of the island. Perhaps if the Melbourne Ministry had been stronger and inspired by greater earnestness of purpose at that time, the calamities and shames of 1865 might have been avoided. In 1865, however, the common causes of dissatisfaction were freshly and further complicated by a dispute about what were called the 'back lands.' This was a question which might under certain circumstances have arisen in Ireland; at least it will be easily understood by those who are acquainted with the condition of Ireland. Lands belonging to some of the great estates in Jamaica had been allowed to run out of cultivation. They were so neglected by their owners that they were turning into mere bush,

The quit-rents due on them to the Crown had not been paid for seven years. The negroes were told that if they paid the arrears of quit-rent they might cultivate these lands and enjoy them free of rent. It may be remarked that the tendency in Jamaica had almost always hitherto been for the Crown officials to take the part of the negroes, and for the Jamaica authorities to side with the local magnates. Trusting to the assurance given, some of the negroes paid the arrears of quit-rent, and brought the land into cultivation. The agent of one of the estates, however, reasserted the right of his principal, who had not been a consenting party to the arrangement, and he endeavoured to evict the negro occupiers of the land. The negroes resisted, and legal proceedings were instituted to turn them out. The legal proceedings were still pending when the events took place which gave occasion to so much controversy. Jamaica was in an unquiet state. 'Within the land,' as in the territory of the chiefs round Lara's castle, 'was many a malcontent, who cursed the tyranny to which he bent.' There, too, 'Frequent broil within had made a path for blood and giant sin, that waited but a signal to begin new havoc such as civil discord blends.' On October 7, 1865, some disturbances took place on the occasion of a magisterial meeting at Morant Bay, a small town on the south-east corner of the island. The negroes appeared to be in an excited state, and many persons believed that an outbreak was at hand. An application was made to the Governor for military assistance. The Governor of Jamaica was Mr. Edward John Eyre, who had

been a successful explorer in Central, West, and Southern Australia, had acted as resident magistrate and protector of aborigines in the region of the Lower Murray in Australia, and had afterwards been Lieutenant-Governor of New Zealand, of the Leeward Islands, and of other places. All Mr. Eyre's dealings with native races up to this time would seem to have earned for him the reputation of a just and humane man. The Governor despatched a small military force by sea to the scene of the expected disturbances. Warrants had been issued meanwhile by the Custos or chief magistrate of the parish in which Morant Bay is situated, for the arrest of some of the persons who had taken part in the previous disturbances—which it may be stated had for their object the rescue of a man on trial for a trifling offence. When the warrants were about to be put into execution, resistance by force was offered. In particular, the attempt to arrest a leading negro agitator, named Paul Bogle, was strenuously and successfully opposed. The police were overpowered, and some were beaten, and others compelled to swear that they would not interfere with the negroes. On the 11th the negroes, armed with sticks, and the 'cutlasses' used in the work of the sugar-cane fields, assembled in considerable numbers in the square of the Court House in Morant Bay. The magistrates were holding a meeting there. The mob made for the Court House; the local volunteer force came to the help of the magistrates. The Riot Act was being read when some stones were thrown. The volunteers fired, and some negroes were seen to

fall. Then the rioters attacked the Court House. The volunteers were few in number, and were easily overpowered; the Court House was set on fire; eighteen persons, the Custos among them, were killed, and about thirty were wounded; and a sort of incoherent insurrection suddenly spread itself over the neighbourhood. The moment, however, that the soldiers sent by the Governor, at first only one hundred in number, arrived upon the scene of disturbance, the insurrection collapsed and vanished. There never was the slightest attempt made by the rioters to keep the field against the troops. The soldiers had not in a single instance to do any fighting. The only business left for them was to hunt out supposed rebels, and bring them before the military tribunals. So evanescent was the whole movement that it is to this day a matter of dispute whether there was any rebellion at all, properly so called; whether there was any organised attempt at insurrection; or whether the disturbances were not the extemporaneous work of a discontented and turbulent mob, whose rush to rescue some of their friends expanded suddenly into an effort to wreak old grievances on the nearest representatives of authority.

On October 13, the Governor proclaimed the whole of the county of Surrey, with the exception of the city of Kingston, under martial law. Jamaica is divided into three counties; Surrey covering the eastern and southern portion, including the region of the Blue Mountains, the towns of Port Antonio and Morant Bay, and the considerable city of Kingston,

with its population of some thirty thousand. Middlesex comprehends the central part of the island, and contains Spanish Town, then the seat of Government. The western part of the island is the county of Cornwall. At this time Jamaica was ruled by the Governor and Council, and the House of Assembly. The Council was composed of twelve persons, nominated, like the Governor, by the Crown; and the House of Assembly consisted of forty-five members elected by the freeholders of each parish. The Council had the place of an Upper House; the Assembly was the Representative Chamber. Among the members of the Assembly was a coloured man of some education and property, George William Gordon. Gordon was a Baptist by religion, and had in him a good deal of the fanatical earnestness of the field-preacher. He was a vehement agitator and a devoted advocate of what he considered to be the rights of the negroes. He appears to have had a certain amount of eloquence, partly of the conventicle and partly of the stump. He was just the sort of man to make himself a nuisance to white colonists and officials who wanted to have everything their own way. Indeed, he belonged to that order of men who are almost sure to be always found in opposition to officialism of any kind. Such a man may do mischief sometimes, but it is certain that out of his very restlessness and troublesomeness he often does good. No really sensible politician would like to see a Legislative Assembly of any kind without some men of the type of Gordon representing the check of perpetual opposition. On the other

hand, Gordon was exactly the sort of person in the treatment of whom a wise authority would be particularly cautious, in order not to allow its own prejudices to operate to his injury and the injury of political justice together. Gordon was in constant disputes with the authorities, and with Governor Eyre himself. He had been a magistrate, but was dismissed from the magistracy in consequence of the alleged violence of his language in making accusations against another justice. He had taken some part in getting up meetings of the coloured population; he had made many appeals to the Colonial Office in London against this or that act on the part of the Governor or the Council, or both. He had been appointed churchwarden, but was declared disqualified for the office in consequence of his having become a 'Native Baptist;' and he had brought an action to recover what he held to be his rights. He had come to hold the position of champion of the rights and claims of the black man against the white. He was a sort of constitutional Opposition in himself. The Governor seems to have at once adopted the conclusion urged on him by others, that Gordon was at the bottom of the insurrectionary movement. In the historical sense he may no doubt be regarded as in some measure the cause of the disturbance, whether insurrectionary or not, which broke out. A man who tells people they are wronged is to that extent the cause of any disturbance which may come of an attempt to get their wrongs righted. A great many persons declared that Fox was the author of the Irish

rebellion of 1798, because he had helped to show that the Irish people had wrongs. In this sense every man who agitates for reform anywhere is responsible should any rebellious movement take place; and the only good citizen is he who approves of all that is done by authority, and never uplifts the voice of opposition to anything. Gordon was a very energetic agitator, and he probably had some sense of self-importance in his agitation; but we entirely agree with Chief-Justice Cockburn in believing that 'so far from there being any evidence to prove that Mr. Gordon intended this insurrection and rebellion, the evidence, as well as the probability of the case, appears to be exactly the other way.' There does not seem to have been one particle of evidence to connect Gordon with a rebellious movement more than there would have been to condemn Mr. Bright as a promoter of rebellion, if the working men of the Reform period, soon to be mentioned in this history, had been drawn into some fatal conflict with the police. In each case it might have been said that only for the agitator who denounced the supposed grievance all would have been quiet; and in neither case was there anything more to be said which could connect the agitator with the disturbance. Mr. Eyre and his advisers, however, had made up their minds that Gordon was the leader of a rebellious conspiracy. They took a course with regard to him which could hardly be excused if he were the self-confessed leader of as formidable a conspiracy as ever endangered the safety of a State.

We have mentioned the fact, that in proclaiming the county of Surrey under martial law, Mr. Eyre had specially excepted the city of Kingston. Mr. Gordon lived near Kingston, and had a place of business in the city; and he seems to have been there attending to his business, as usual, during the days while the disturbances were going on. The Governor ordered a warrant to be issued for Gordon's arrest. When this fact became known to Gordon, he went to the house of the General in command of the Forces at Kingston and gave himself up. The Governor had him put at once on board a war steamer, and conveyed to Morant Bay. Having given himself up in a place where martial law did not exist, where the ordinary courts were open, and where, therefore, he would have been tried with all the forms and safeguards of the civil law, he was purposely carried away to a place which had been put under martial law. Here an extraordinary sort of court-martial was sitting. It was composed of two young navy lieutenants and an ensign in one of her Majesty's West India regiments. Gordon was hurried before this grotesque tribunal, charged with high treason, found guilty, and sentenced to death. The sentence was approved by the officer in command of the troops sent to Morant Bay. It was then submitted to the Governor, and approved by him also. It was carried into effect without much delay. The day following Gordon's conviction was Sunday, and it was not thought seemly to hang a man on the Sabbath. He was allowed, therefore, to live over that day. On the

morning of Monday, October 23, Gordon was hanged. He bore his fate with great heroism, and wrote just before his death a letter to his wife, which is full of pathos in its simple and dignified manliness. He died protesting his innocence of any share in disloyal conspiracy or insurrectionary purpose.

The whole of the proceedings connected with the trial of Gordon were absolutely illegal: they were illegal from first to last. It is almost impossible to conceive of any transaction more entirely unlawful. Every step in it was a separate outrage on law. But for its tragic end the whole affair would seem to belong to the domain of burlesque rather than to that sober history. The act which conveyed Mr. Gordon from the protection of civil law to the authority of a drumhead court-martial was grossly illegal. The tribunal was constituted in curious defiance of law and precedent. It is contrary to all authority to form a court-martial by mixing together the officers of the two different services. It was an unauthorised tribunal, however, even if considered as only a military court-martial, or only a naval court-martial. Whatever way we take it, it was irregular and illegal. It would have been so had all its members been soldiers, or had all been sailors. Care seemed to have been taken so to constitute it that it must in any case be illegal. The prisoner thus brought by unlawful means before an illegal tribunal was tried upon testimony taken in ludicrous opposition to all the rules of evidence. Chief Justice Cockburn says: 'After the most careful perusal of the evidence which was ad-

duced against him, I come irresistibly to the conclusion that if the man had been tried upon that evidence'—and here the Chief Justice checked himself and said: 'I must correct myself. He could not have been tried upon that evidence; I was going too far, a great deal too far, in assuming that he could. He could not have been tried upon that evidence. No competent judge acquainted with the duties of his office could have received that evidence. Three-fourths, I had almost said nine-tenths, of the evidence upon which that man was convicted and sentenced to death, was evidence which, according to no known rules—not only of ordinary law, but of military law—according to no rules of right or justice could possibly have been admitted; and it never would have been admitted if a competent judge had presided, or if there had been the advantage of a military officer of any experience in the practice of courts-martial.' Such as the evidence was, however, compounded of scraps of the paltriest hearsay, and of things said when the prisoner was not present; of depositions made apparently to supplement evidence given before, and not thought strong enough; strengthened probably in the hope of thus purchasing the safety of the witnesses, and on which the witnesses were never cross-examined—such as the evidence was, supposing it admissible, supposing it trustworthy, supposing it true beyond all possibility of question, yet the Chief Justice was convinced that it testified rather to the innocence than to the guilt of the prisoner. By such a court, on such evidence, Gordon was put to death.

Meanwhile the carnival of repression was going on. The insurrection, or whatever the movement was which broke out on October 11, was over long before. It never offered the slightest resistance to the soldiers. It never showed itself to them. An armed insurgent was never seen by them. Nevertheless, for weeks after, the hangings, the floggings, the burnings of houses, were kept up. Men were hanged, women were flogged merely 'suspect of being suspect.' Many were flogged or hanged for no particular reason but that they happened to come in the way of men who were in a humour for flogging and hanging. Women—to be sure they were only coloured women—were stripped and scourged by the saviours of society with all the delight which a savage village population of the Middle Ages might have felt in torturing witches. The report of the Royal Commissioners stated that 439 persons were put to death, and that over six hundred, including many women, were flogged, some under circumstances of revolting cruelty. Cats made of piano-wire were in some instances used for the better effect of flagellation. Some of the scourges were shown to the Commissioners, who observe that it is 'painful to think that any man should have used such an instrument for the torturing of his fellow-creatures.' The Commissioners summed up their Report by declaring that the punishments inflicted were excessive; that the punishment of death was unnecessarily frequent; that the floggings were reckless, and in some cases positively barbarous; that the burning of one thousand houses was

wanton and cruel.' The fury at last spent itself. *Lassata necdum satiata.*

When the story reached England in clear and trustworthy form, two antagonistic parties were instantly formed. The extreme on the one side glorified Governor Eyre, and held that by his prompt action he had saved the white population of Jamaica from all the horrors of triumphant negro insurrection. The extreme on the other side denounced him as a mere fiend. The majority on both sides were more reasonable; but the difference between them was only less wide. An association called the Jamaica Committee was formed for the avowed purpose of seeing that justice was done. It comprised some of the most illustrious Englishmen. Men became members of that committee who had never taken part in public agitation of any kind before. Another association was founded, on the opposite side, for the purpose of sustaining Governor Eyre, and it must be owned that it too had great names. Mr. Mill may be said to have led the one side, and Mr. Carlyle the other. The natural bent of each man's genius and temper turned him to the side of the Jamaica negroes, or of the Jamaica Governor. Mr. Tennyson, Mr. Kingsley, Mr. Ruskin, followed Mr. Carlyle; we know now that Mr. Dickens was of the same way of thinking. Mr. Herbert Spencer, Professor Huxley, Mr. Goldwin Smith, were in agreement with Mr. Mill. We have purposely omitted the names of politicians, whom any reader can range without difficulty according to his knowledge of their career and ways of thinking.

No one needs to be told that Mr. Bright took the side of the oppressed, and Mr. Disraeli that of authority. The case on either side may be briefly stated. We put out of consideration altogether the position taken up by only too many of those who proclaimed themselves advocates of Mr. Eyre, and who volunteered a line of defence on his behalf for which he would probably have given them little thanks. That was what some one at the time in blunt expressive words described as the 'damned nigger' principle; the principle that any sort of treatment is good enough for negroes, and generally speaking serves them right. This kind of argument was very effective among considerable classes of persons, but it was not allowed to make its appearance much in public debate. In the House of Commons it never, at all events, got higher than the smoking-room; the reporters in the gallery were not allowed any opportunity of recording it. Perhaps, on the other side, we may fairly put out of our consideration the view of those who, having from the most benevolent motives identified themselves all their lives long with the cause of oppressed negroes, fell instinctively and at once into the ranks of any movement professing to defend a negro population. The more reasonable of those who supported Mr. Eyre did not concern themselves to vindicate the legality or even the justice of all that he had done. Lord Carnarvon, the new Colonial Secretary, frankly admitted that in his opinion acts of cruelty and injustice had been done during and after the rebellion. Many were quite willing to admit that the trial of

Gordon had been irregular, and that his hasty execution was to be deplored. What they did contend was, that at a terrible crisis Mr. Eyre did the best he could; that he was confronted with the fearful possibility of a negro insurrection, where the whites were not one in twenty of the blacks, and where a moment's success to the rebels might have put the life of every white man, and the honour of every white woman, at the mercy of furious mobs of savage negroes. 'Say what you will,' they urged, 'he stamped out the rebellion. He acted illegally, because there was no time for being legal. He sanctioned unmerciful deeds, because he had to choose between mercy to murderous blacks and mercy to loyal and innocent whites. You complain of the flogging of black women; he was thinking of the honour and the lives of white women. He crushed the rebellion utterly; he positively frightened it into submission. He was dealing with savages; he took the only steps which could have saved the loyal people he had in charge from an orgy of cruelty and licentiousness. Had he stayed his hand a moment all was lost. Many things were done which we deplore; which we would not have done; which he would not have done, or sanctioned, if there were time to balance claims and consider nicely individual rights. But he saved the white population, and put down the insurrection; and we feel gratitude to him first of all.'

Such is, we think, a fair statement of the case relied upon by the more reasonable of the defenders

of Mr. Eyre. To this the opposite party answered that in fact the insurrection, supposing it to have been an insurrection, was all over before the floggings, the hangings, and the burnings set in. Not merely were the troops masters of the field, but there was no armed enemy anywhere to be seen in the field or out of it. They contended that men are not warranted in inflicting wholesale and hideous punishments merely in order to strike such terror as may prevent the possibility of any future disturbance. As an illustration of the curious ethical principles which the hour called forth, it may be mentioned that one of the best-instructed and ablest of the London journals distinctly contended that excess of punishment would be fully justified as a means of preventing further outbreaks. 'Consider,' such was the argument, 'what the horrors of a successful outbreak in Jamaica might be, or even of an outbreak successful for a few days; consider what blood its repression would cost even to the negroes themselves; and then say whether anyone ought to shrink from inflicting a few superfluous floggings and hangings if these would help to strike terror, and make new rebellion impossible? Even the flogging of women—disagreeable work, no doubt, for English soldiers to have to do—if it struck terror into their husbands and brothers, and thus discouraged rebellion, would it too not be justified?' One cannot better deal with this argument than by pushing it just a little further. Suppose the burning alive of a few women and children seemed likely to have a deterrent effect on dis-

loyal husbands and fathers generally, would it not be well to light the pile? What would the torture and death of a score or so of women and children be when compared with the bloodshed which such a timely example might avert? Yet any sane man would answer that rather than that he would brave any risk; and so we get to the end of the argument at once. We have only arrived at an acknowledgment of the fact that the repression of insurrection, like everything on earth, has its restraining moral code, which custom and civilisation, if there were nothing else, must be allowed to establish. The right of Englishmen to rule in Jamaica is a right which has to be exercised with, and not without, regard for human feelings and Christian laws. Not a few persons endeavoured to satisfy their own and the public conscience by praising the virtues of Governor Eyre's career, and casting aspersions on the character of the unfortunate Gordon. Professor Huxley disposed once for all of that sort of argument by the quiet remark that he knew of no law authorising virtuous persons as such to put to death less virtuous persons as such.

The Report of the Commissioners was made in April, 1866. It declared in substance that the disturbances had their immediate origin in a planned resistance to authority, arising partly out of a desire to obtain the land free of rent, and partly out of the want of confidence felt by the labouring class in the tribunals by which most of the disputes affecting their interests were decided; that the disturbance

spread rapidly, and that Mr. Eyre deserved praise for the skill and vigour with which he had stopped it in the beginning; but that martial law was kept in force too long; that the punishments inflicted were excessive; that the punishment of death was unnecessarily frequent; that the floggings were barbarous, and the burnings wanton and cruel; that although it was probable that Gordon, by his writings and speeches, had done much to bring about excitement and discontent, and thus rendered insurrection possible, yet there was no sufficient proof of his complicity in the outbreak, or in any organised conspiracy against the Government; and, indeed, that there was no widespread conspiracy of any kind. Of course this finished Mr. Eyre's career as a Colonial Governor. A new Governor, Sir J. P. Grant, was sent out to Jamaica, and a new Constitution was given to the island. The Jamaica Committee, however, did not let the matter drop there. They first called upon the Attorney-General to take proceedings against Mr. Eyre and some of his subordinates. The Government had, meanwhile, passed into Conservative hands, in consequence of events which have yet to be told; and the Attorney-General declined to prosecute. Probably a Liberal Attorney-General would have done just the same thing. Then the Jamaica Committee decided on prosecuting Mr. Eyre and his subordinates themselves. They took various proceedings, but in every case with the same result. We need not go into the history of these proceedings, and the many controversies, legal and otherwise, which they occa-

sioned. The bills of indictment never got beyond the grand jury stage. The grand jury always threw them out. On one memorable occasion the attempt gave the Lord Chief Justice of England an opportunity of delivering the charge to the grand jury from which we have already cited some passages: a charge entitled to the rank of an historical declaration of the law of England, and the limits of the military power even in cases of insurrection. Mr. Carlyle found great fault with the Chief Justice for having merely laid down the law of England. 'Lordship,' he wrote, 'if you were to speak for six hundred years, instead of six hours, you would only prove the more to us that, unwritten if you will, but real and fundamental, anterior to all written laws and first making written laws possible, there must have been, and is, and will be, coeval with human society from its first beginnings to its ultimate end, an actual martial-law of more validity than any other law whatever.' The business of the Lord Chief Justice, however, was not to go in philosophical quest of those higher laws of which Mr. Carlyle assumed to be the interpreter. His was the humbler but more practical part to expound the laws of England, and he did his duty.

The prosecutions can hardly be said to have been without use which gave opportunity for this most important exposition from such high authority. But they had no effect as against Mr. Eyre. Even the Chief Justice, who exposed with such just severity the monstrous misuse of power which had been seen

in Jamaica, still left it to the grand jury to say whether after all—considering the state of things that prevailed in the island, the sudden danger, the consternation, and the confusion—the proceedings of the authorities, however mistaken, were not done honestly and faithfully in what was believed to be the proper administration of justice. After many discussions in Parliament, the Government in 1872—once again a Liberal Government—decided on paying Mr. Eyre the expenses to which he had been put in defending himself against the various prosecutions; and the House of Commons, after a long debate, agreed to the vote by a large majority. The Jamaica Committee were denounced by many voices, and in very unmeasured language, for what they had done. Yet no public body ever were urged on to an unpopular course by purer motives than those which influenced Mr. Mill and his associates. They were filled with the same spirit of generous humanity which animated Burke when he pressed the impeachment against Warren Hastings. They were sustained by a desire to secure the rights of British subjects for a despised and maltreated negro population. They were inspired with a longing to cleanse the name of England from the stain of a share in the abominations of that unexampled repression. Yet we do not think on the whole that there was any failure of justice. A career full of bright promise was cut short for Mr. Eyre, and for some of his subordinates as well; and no one accused Mr. Eyre personally of anything worse than a fury of mistaken zeal. The deeds which were done

by his authority, or to which, when they were done, he gave his authority's sanction, were branded with such infamy that it is almost impossible such things could ever be done again in England's name. Even those who excused under the circumstances the men by whom the deeds were done, had seldom a word to say in defence of the acts themselves. The cruelties of that saturnalia of vengeance are absolutely without parallel in the history of our times; perhaps the very horror they inspired, the very shame of the few arguments employed to defend them, may make for mercy in the future. The one strong argument for severity, on which so many relied when upholding the acts of Mr. Eyre, is curiously confuted by the history of Jamaica itself. That argument was, that severity of an extraordinary kind was necessary to prevent the repetition of rebellion. Rigour of repression had been tried long enough in Jamaica without producing any such effect. During one hundred and fifty years there had been about thirty insurrections, in some of which the measures of repression employed were sweeping and stern enough to have shaken the nerves of a Couthon and disturbed the conscience of a Claverhouse. The Chief Justice declared that there was not a stone in the island of Jamaica which, if the rains of heaven had not washed off from it the stains of blood, might not have borne terrible witness to the manner in which martial law had been exercised for the suppression of native discontent. The deeds, therefore, that were done under the authority of Mr. Eyre found no plea to excuse them in the

history of the past. Such policy had been tried again and again, and had failed. The man who tried it again in 1865 undertook the responsibility of defying the authority of experience, as well as that of constitutional and moral law.

CHAPTER L.

DRIVEN BACK ACROSS THE RUBICON.

The Queen opened the new Parliament in person. She then performed the ceremony for the first time since the death of the Prince Consort. The speech from the throne contained a paragraph which announced that her Majesty had directed that information should be procured in reference to the right of voting in the election of members of Parliament, and that when the information was complete, 'the attention of Parliament will be called to the result thus obtained, with a view to such improvements in the laws which regulate the right of voting in the election of members of the House of Commons as may tend to strengthen our free institutions, and conduce to the public welfare.' Some announcement on the subject of Reform was expected by everyone. Nobody could have had any doubt that the new Government would at once bring forward some measure to extend the franchise. The only surprise felt was perhaps at the cautious and limited way in which the proposed measure was indicated in the royal speech. Some of the more extreme reformers thought there was something ominous in this way of opening the question. A mere promise to obtain information on the subject

of the franchise appeared to be minimising as much as possible the importance of the whole subject. Besides, it was asked, what information is required more than we have already? Is this to be merely an investigation as to the number of persons whom this or that scale of franchise would add to the constituencies? Is the character of the reform to be decided by the mere addition which it would make to the voters' lists rather than by the political principles which an extended franchise represents? Is there to be what Burke calls 'a low-minded inquisition into numbers,' in order that too many Englishmen should not be allowed the privilege of a vote?

There was something ominous, therefore, in the manner in which the first mention of the new Reform Bill was received, as well as in the terms of the announcement. Many circumstances too made the time unpropitious for such an undertaking. The cattle plague had broken out towards the close of the previous year, and had spread with most alarming rapidity. At the end of 1865 it was announced that about 80,000 cattle had been attacked by the disease, of which some 40,000 had died. From 6,000 to 8,000 animals were dying every week. The Government, the cattle-owners, and the scientific men, were much occupied in devising plans for the restriction of the malady. Some keen controversy had arisen over the Government proposals for making good the losses of the cattle-owners whose animals had to be killed in obedience to official orders to prevent the spread of disease. There were already rumours of the ap-

proach of that financial distress which was to break out shortly in disastrous commercial panic. Cholera was believed to be travelling ominously westward. There were threatened disturbances in Ireland and alarms about a gigantic Fenian conspiracy. It did not need to be particularly keen-eyed to foresee that there was likely soon to be a collision of irreconcileable interests on the Continent. There was uneasiness about Jamaica; there was uneasiness about certain English men and women who were detained as prisoners by Theodore, King of Abyssinia. Moreover the Parliament had only just been elected, and a Reform Bill would mean a speedy dissolution, with a renewal of expense and trouble to the members of the House of Commons. Certainly the time did not seem tempting for a sudden revival of the reform controversy which had been allowed to sleep in a sort of Kyffhaüser cavern during the later years of Lord Palmerston's life.

Many Conservatives did not believe that the studied moderation of the announcement in the Queen's Speech could really be taken as evidence of a moderate intention on the part of the Ministry. While Radicals generally insisted that the strength of the old Whig party, 'the Dukes,' as the phrase went, had been successfully exerted to compel a compromise and keep Mr. Gladstone down, most of the Tories would have it that Mr. Gladstone now had got it all his own way, and that the cautious vagueness of the Queen's Speech would only prove to be the prelude to very decisive and alarming

changes in the constitution. Not since the introduction by Lord John Russell of the measure which became law in 1832, had a Reform Bill been expected in England with so much curiosity, with so much alarm, with so much disposition to a foregone conclusion of disappointment. On March 12 Mr. Gladstone introduced the bill. His speech was eloquent; but the House of Commons was not stirred. It was evident at once that the proposed measure was only a compromise; and a compromise of the most unattractive kind. The substance of the Government scheme may be explained in a single sentence. The bill proposed to reduce the county franchise from fifty pounds to fourteen pounds, and the borough franchise from ten to seven pounds. There was a savings' bank franchise, and a lodger franchise, but we need not discuss smaller details and qualifying provisions. The borough franchise of course was the central question in any reform measure; and this was to be reduced by three pounds. The man who could be enthusiastic over such a reform must have been a person whose enthusiasm was scarcely worth arousing. The peculiarity of the situation was, that without a genuine popular enthusiasm nothing could be done. The House of Commons as a whole did not want reform. For one obvious reason, the House had only just been elected; members had spent money and taken much trouble; and they did not like the idea of having to encounter the risk and expense all over again almost immediately. All the Conservatives were of course openly and consistently

opposed to reform; not a few of the professing Liberals secretly detested it. These latter would accept it and try to put on an appearance of welcoming it if popular excitement and the demeanour of the Government showed that they must be for it or against it. Only a small number of men in the House were genuine in their anxiety for immediate change; and of these the majority were too earnest and extreme to care for a reform which only meant a reduction of the borough franchise from ten pounds to seven pounds. It seemed a ridiculous anti-climax, after all the indignant eloquence about 'unenfranchised millions,' to come down to a scheme for enfranchising a few hundreds here and there. It was hard for ordinary minds to understand that a ten pounds' franchise meant servitude and shame, but a seven pounds' franchise was national liberty and salvation. All this for three pounds was a little too much for plain people to comprehend. The bill was founded on no particular principle; it merely said, 'we have at present a certain scale of franchise; let us make it a little lower, and our successors if they feel inclined can keep on lowering it.' No well-defined basis was reached; there seemed no reason why, if such a bill had been passed, some politician might not move the session after for a bill to reduce the franchise a pound or two lower. Absolute finality in politics is of course unattainable, but a statesman would do well to see at least that a distinct and secure ledge is reached in his descent. He ought not to be content to slip a little way down to-day, and leave chance to

decide whether he may not have to slip a little way further to-morrow.

The announcement made by the Government had only what is called in theatrical circles a *succès d'estime*. Those who believed in the sincerity and high purpose of Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone, and who therefore assumed that if they said this was all they could do there was nothing else to be done—these supported the bill. Mr. Bright supported it; somewhat coldly at first, but afterwards when warmed by the glow of debate and of opposition, with all his wonted power. It was evident, however, that he was supporting Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone rather than their Reform Bill. Mr. Mill supported the bill, partly no doubt for the same reason, and partly because it had the support of Mr. Bright. But it would have been hard to find anyone who said that he really cared much about the measure itself, or that it was the sort of thing he would have proposed if he had his way. There were public meetings got up of course in support of the bill, and the agitation naturally gathered heat as it went on. Mr. Gladstone became for a time a popular agitator on behalf of his measure, and stumped the country during the Easter holidays. It was during this political campaign that he made the famous speech in Liverpool, in which he announced that the Government had passed the Rubicon; had broken the bridge and burned the boats behind them. He truly had done so. His career was to be thenceforward as the path of an arrow in the direction of popular reform; but

his Government had to recross the Rubicon; to make use of the broken bridge somehow for the purposes of retreat.

Before, however, the delivery of this celebrated speech, the defects of the bill, and the lack of public interest in it, had produced their natural effect in the House of Commons. The moment it was evident that the public, as a whole, were not enthusiastic about the measure, the House of Commons began to feel that it could do as it pleased in the matter. It may seem rather surprising now that the Conservatives, or at least those of them who had foresight enough to know that some manner of change was inevitable, did not accept this trivial and harmless measure, and so have done with the unwelcome subject for some time to come. Many of the Conservatives, however, were not only opposed to all reform of the suffrage on principle, but were still under the firm belief that they could stave it off for their time. Others there were who honestly believed that if a change were inevitable it would be better for the good of the country that it should be something in the nature of a permanent settlement, and that there should not be a periodical revival of agitation incessantly perplexing the public mind. Others, too, no doubt, saw even already that there would be partisan chances secured by embarrassing the Government anyhow. Therefore the Conservatives as a man opposed the measure; but they had allies. Day after day saw new secessions of emboldened Whigs and half-hearted Liberals. The Thanes were flying from the side of the Government.

Mr. Gladstone had announced his intention also to bring in a bill dealing with the redistribution of seats; but he preferred to take this after the Reform Bill. At once he was encountered by an amendment from his own side of the House, and from very powerful representatives of Whig family interest, calling on him to take the redistribution scheme at once; to alter the rental to a rating franchise; to do all manner of things calculated to change the nature of the bill, or to interfere with the chances of its being passed into law. The Ministerial side of the House was fast becoming demoralised. The Liberal party was breaking up into mutinous camps and unmanageable coteries.

The fate of this unhappy bill is not now a matter of great historical importance. Far more interesting than the process of its defeat is the memory of the eloquence by which it was assailed and defended. One reputation sprang into light with these memorable debates. Mr. Robert Lowe was the hero of the Opposition that fought against the bill. He was the Achilles of the Anti-Reformers. His attacks on the Government had, of course, all the more piquancy that they came from a Liberal, and one who had held office in two Liberal administrations. The Tory benches shouted and screamed with delight, as in speech after speech of admirable freshness and vigour Mr. Lowe poured his scathing sarcasms in upon the bill and its authors. Even their own leader and champion, Mr. Disraeli, became of comparatively small account with the Tories when they heard Mr. Lowe's

invectives against their enemies. Much of Mr. Lowe's success was undoubtedly due to the manner in which he hit the tone and temper of the Conservatives and of the disaffected Whigs. Applause and admiration are contagious in the House of Commons. When a great number of voices join in cheers and in praise, other voices are caught by the attraction, and cheer and praise out of the sheer infection of sympathy. It is needless to say that the applause reacts upon the orator. The more he feels that the House admires him, the more likely he is to make himself worthy of the admiration. The occasion told on Mr. Lowe. His form seemed, metaphorically at least, to grow greater and grander on that scene, as the enthusiasm of his admirers waxed and heated. Certainly he never after that time made any great mark by his speeches, or won back any of the fame as an orator which was his during that short and to him splendid period. But the speeches themselves were masterly as mere literary productions. Not many men could have fewer physical qualifications for success in oratory than Mr. Lowe. He had an awkward and ungainly presence; his gestures were angular and ungraceful; his voice was harsh and rasping; his articulation was so imperfect that he became now and then almost unintelligible; his sight was so short that when he had to read a passage or extract of any kind, he could only puzzle over its contents in a painful and blundering way, even with the paper held up close to his eyes; and his memory was not good enough to allow him to quote anything without the

help of documents. How, it may be asked in wonder, was such a speaker as this to contend in eloquence with the torrent-like fluency, the splendid diction, the silver-trumpet voice of Gladstone; or with the thrilling vibrations of Bright's noble eloquence, now penetrating in its pathos, and now irresistible in its humour? Even those who well remember these great debates may ask themselves in unsatisfied wonder the same question now. It is certain that Mr. Lowe has not the most distant claim to be ranked as an orator with Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright. Yet it is equally certain that he did for that season stand up against each of them, against them both; against them both at their very best; and that he held his own.

Mr. Disraeli was thrown completely into the shade. Mr. Disraeli was not, it is said, much put out by this. He listened quietly, perhaps even contemptuously, looking upon the whole episode as one destined to pass quickly away. He did not believe that Mr. Lowe was likely to be a peer of Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright—or of himself—in debate. 'You know I never made much of Lowe,' he said in conversation with a political opponent some years after, and when Mr. Lowe's eloquence had already become only a memory. But for the time Mr. Lowe was the master-spirit of the Opposition to the Reform Bill. In sparkling sentences, full of classical allusion and of illustrations drawn from all manner of literatures, he denounced and satirized demagogues, democratic governments, and every influence that tended to bring about any political condition which allowed of an omi-

nous comparison with something in Athenian history. Reduced to their logical and philosophical meaning, Mr. Lowe's speeches were really nothing but arguments for that immemorial object of desire, the government by the wise and good. They had nothing in particular to do with the small question in domestic legislation, as to whether seven pounds or ten pounds was to be the limit of a borough franchise. They would have been just as effective if used in favour of an existing seven pounds' qualification, and against a proposed qualification of six pounds fifteen shillings. Seven pounds, it might have been insisted, was just the low-water mark of the wise and good; any lower we shall have the rule of the unwise and the wicked. Nor did Mr. Lowe show how, if the fierce wave of democracy was rising in such terrible might, it could be dammed out by the retention of a ten pounds' franchise. His alarms and his portents were in amazing contrast to his proposed measures of safety. He hoped to bind Leviathan with packthread. Alaric was at the gates; Mr. Lowe's last hope was in the power of the Court of Chancery to serve the invader with an injunction. The simple-minded deputies who, during the *coup d'état* in Paris, went forth to meet the soldiers of the usurper with their scarfs of office, in the belief that they could thus restrain them from violation of the constitutional law, were on a philosophical level with Mr. Lowe when he proclaimed to England that her ancient system must fall into cureless ruin and become the shame and scandal of all time, if she abandoned her last rampart, the

ten pounds' franchise. But Mr. Lowe was embodying in brilliant sarcasm and vivid paradox the fears, prejudices, and spites, the honest dislikes and solid objections of a large proportion of English society. Trades' unions, strikes, rumours of political disaffection in Ireland, the angry and extravagant words of artizan orators and agitators in London; a steady hatred of all American principles; a certain disappointment that the American Republic had not fulfilled most men's predictions and gone to pieces—these and various other feelings combined to make a great many Englishmen particularly hostile to any proposals for political reform at that moment. Mr. Lowe was not merely the mouthpiece of all these sentiments, but he gave what seemed to be an overwhelming philosophical argument to prove their wisdom and justice. The Conservatives made a hero, and even an idol, of him. Shrewd old members of the party, who ought to have known better, were heard to declare that he was not only the greatest orator, but even the greatest statesman, of the day. In truth, Mr. Lowe was neither orator nor statesman. He had some of the gifts which are needed to make a man an orator, but hardly any of those which constitute a statesman. He was a literary man and a scholar, who had a happy knack of saying bitter things in an epigrammatic way; he really hated the Reform Bill, towards which Mr. Disraeli probably felt no emotion whatever, and he started into prominence as an anti-reformer just at the right moment to suit the Conservatives and embarrass and dismay the

Liberal party. He was greatly detested for a time amongst the working classes, for whose benefit the measure was chiefly introduced. He not only spoke out with cynical frankness his own opinion of the merits and morals of the people 'who live in these small houses,' but he implied that all the other members of the House held the same opinion, if they would only venture to give it a tongue. He was once or twice mobbed in the streets; he was strongly disliked and dreaded for the hour by the Liberals; he was the most prominent figure on the stage during these weeks of excitement; and no doubt he was perfectly happy.

The debates on the bill brought out some speeches which have not been surpassed in the Parliamentary history of our time. Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone were at their very best. Mr. Bright likened the formation of the little band of malcontents to the doings of David in the cave of Adullam when he called about him 'every one that was in distress and every one that was discontented,' and became a captain over them. The allusion told upon the House with instant effect, for many had suspected and some had said that if Mr. Horsman and Mr. Lowe had been more carefully conciliated by the Prime Minister at the time of his Government's formation, there might have been no such acrimonious opposition to the bill. The little third party were at once christened the Adullamites, and the name still survives and is likely long to survive its old political history. Mr. Gladstone's speech, with which the

great debate on the second reading concluded, was aflame with impassioned eloquence. One passage, in which he met the superfluous accusation, that he had come over a stranger to the Liberal camp, was filled with a certain pathetic dignity. The closing words of the speech, in which he prophesied a speedy success to the principles then on the verge of defeat, brought the debate fitingly up to its highest point of interest and excitement. 'You cannot,' he said in his closing words, 'fight against the future. Time is on our side. The great social forces which move on in their might and majesty, and which the tumult of our debates does not for a moment impede or disturb—those great social forces are against you; they are marshalled on our side, and the banner which we now carry, though perhaps at this moment it may droop over our sinking heads, yet soon again will float in the eye of heaven, and it will be borne by the firm hands of the united people of the three kingdoms perhaps not to an easy but to a certain and a not distant victory.'

This speech was concluded on the morning of April 28. The debate which it brought to a close had been carried on for eight nights. The House of Commons was wrought up to a pitch of the most intense excitement when the division came to be taken. The closing passages of Mr. Gladstone's speech had shown clearly enough that he did not expect much of a triumph for the Government. The House was crowded to excess. The numbers voting were large beyond almost any other previous instance.

There were for the second reading of the bill 318: there were against it 313. The second reading was carried by a majority of only five. The wild cheers of the Conservatives and the Adullamites showed on which 'sword sat laurel victory.' Everyone knew then that the bill was doomed. It only remained for those who opposed it to put a few amendments on the paper as a prelude to the bill's going into committee, and the Opposition must succeed. The question now was not whether the measure would be a failure, but only when the failure would have to be confessed.

The time for the confession soon came. The opponents of the reform scheme kept pouring in amendments on the motion to go into committee. These came chiefly from the Ministerial side of the House. As in 1860, so now in 1866, the Conservative leader of the House of Commons had the satisfaction of seeing his work done for him very effectively by those who were in general his political opponents. He was not compelled to run the risk or incur the responsibility of pledging himself or his party against all reform in order to get rid of this particular scheme. All that he wanted was being done for him by men who had virtually pledged themselves over and over again in favour of reform. The bill at last got into committee; and here the strife was renewed. Lord Stanley moved an amendment to postpone the clauses relating to the county franchise until the redistribution of seats should first have been dealt with. This amendment was rejected, but

not by a great majority. Mr. Ward Hunt moved that the franchise in counties be fourteen pounds rateable value, instead of gross estimated rental. This too was defeated. Lord Dunkellin, usually a supporter of the Government, moved that the seven pounds franchise in boroughs be on a rating instead of a rental qualification. The effect of this would be to make the franchise a little higher than the Government proposed to fix it. Houses are generally rated at a value somewhat below the amount of the rent paid on them, and therefore a rating franchise of seven pounds would probably in most places be about equivalent to a rental franchise of eight pounds. Therefore the opponents of reform would have interposed another barrier of twenty shillings in certain cases between England and the flood of democracy. Prudent and law-abiding men might accept with safety a franchise of eight pounds, or even say seven pounds ten shillings, in boroughs; but a franchise of seven pounds would mean the Red Republic, mob-rule, the invasion of democracy, the shameful victory, and all the other terrible things which Mr. Lowe had been foreshadowing in his prophetic fury. Lord Dunkellin carried his amendment; 315 voted for it, only 304 against. The announcement of the numbers was received with tumultuous demonstrations of joy. The Adullamites had saved the State. Lord Russell's last reform scheme was a failure; and the Liberal Ministry had come to an end.

Lord Russell and his colleagues tendered their resignation to the Queen, and after a little delay

and some discussion, the resignation was accepted. It would hardly have been possible for Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone to do otherwise. Their Reform Bill was the one distinctive measure of the session. It was the measure which especially divided their policy from that of Lord Palmerston's closing years. To abandon it would be to abandon their chief reason for being in office at all. They could not carry it. They had got as far in the session as the last few days of June, and everything was against them. The commercial panic had intervened. The suspension of the great firm of Overend and Gurney had brought failure after failure with it. The famous 'Black Friday,' Friday, May 11, had made its most disastrous mark in the history of the City of London. The Bank Charter had to be suspended. The cattle plague, although checked by the stringent measures of the Government, was still raging, and the landlords and cattle-owners were still in a state of excitement and alarm, and had long been clamouring over the insufficiency of the compensation which other classes condemned as unreasonable alike in principle and in proportion. The day before the success of Lord Dunkellin's motion, the Emperor of Austria had issued a manifesto explaining the course of events which compelled him to draw the sword against Prussia. A day or two after, Italy entered into the quarrel by declaring war against Austria. The time seemed hopeless for pressing a small Reform Bill on in the face of an unwilling Parliament, and for throwing the country into the turmoil and expense of

another general election. Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone accepted the situation, and resigned office.

The one mistake they had made was to bring in a Reform Bill of so insignificant and almost unmeaning a character. It is more than probable that the difficulties Lord Russell had with the Whig section of his Cabinet compelled him to compromise to a degree which his own inclinations and his own principles would not have approved, and to which Mr. Gladstone could only yield a reluctant assent. But if this be the explanation of what happened, it would have been better to put off the measure for a session or two, and allow public opinion out of doors to express itself so clearly as to convince the Whigs that the people in general were really in earnest about reform. No Reform Bill can be carried unless it is sustained by such an amount of enthusiasm among its supporters in and out of Parliament as to convince the timid, the selfish, and the doubting that the measure must be passed. In the nature of things the men actually in Parliament cannot be expected to enter with any great spontaneous enthusiasm into a project for sending them back to their constituencies to run the risk and bear the cost of a new election by untried voters. It will, therefore, always be easy for the men in possession to persuade their consciences that the public good is opposed to any change, if no strong demand be made for the particular change in question. Now the compromise which Lord Russell's Government offered in the shape of a Reform Bill, was not calculated to stir up the enthusiasm of anyone. The

ardour with which in the end it came to be advocated was merely the heat which in men's natures is always generated by a growing controversy and by fierce opposition. The strongest and most effective attack made by the Opposition, that led by Mr. Lowe, was not directed against that particular measure so much as against all measures of reform ; against the fundamental principle of a popular suffrage, and indeed of a representative assembly. As soon as the doubtful men in the House discovered that there was no genuine enthusiasm existing on behalf of the bill, its fate became certain. When the more extreme Reformers came to think over the condition of things, and when their spirits were set free from the passion of recent controversy, very few of them could have felt any great regret for the defeat of the bill. Those who understood the real feelings of the yet unenfranchised part of the population, knew well that some Administration would have to introduce a strong measure of reform before long. They were content to wait. The interval of delay proved shorter than they could well have expected.

The defeat of the bill and the resignation of the Ministry brought the political career of Lord Russell to a close. He took advantage of the occasion soon after to make a sort of formal announcement that he handed over the task of leading the Liberal party to Mr. Gladstone. He appeared indeed in public life on several occasions after his resignation of office. He took part sometimes in the debates of the House of Lords ; he even once or twice introduced measures

there, and endeavoured to get them passed. During the long controversies on the Washington Treaty and the claims of the United States, he took a somewhat prominent part in the discussions of the Peers, and was always listened to with attention and respect. About a year after the fall of his Administration he was one of the company at a breakfast given to Mr. Garrison, the American Anti-Slavery leader, in St. James's Hall, and he won much applause there by the frankness and good spirit of his tribute to the memory of President Lincoln, and by his manly acknowledgment of more than one mistake in his former judgments of Lincoln's policy and character. Lord Russell spoke on this occasion with a vigour quite equal to that which he might have displayed some twenty years before; and indeed many of those present felt surprised at his resolve to abandon active public life while he still seemed so well capable of bearing a part in it. Lord Russell's career, however, was practically at an end. It had been a long and an interesting career. It was begun amid splendid chances. Lord John Russell was born in the very purple of politics; he was cradled and nursed among statesmen and orators; the fervid breath of young liberty fanned his boyhood; his tutors, friends, companions, were the master-spirits who rule the fortunes of nations; he had the ministerial benches for a training ground, and had a seat in the Administration at his disposal when another young man might have been glad of a seat in an opera box. He must have been brought into more or less intimate association

with all the men and women worth knowing in Europe since the early part of the century. He was a pupil of Dugald Stewart at Edinburgh, and he sat as a youth at the feet of Fox. He had accompanied Wellington in some of his Peninsular campaigns; he measured swords with Canning and Peel successively through years of Parliamentary warfare. He knew Metternich and Talleyrand. He had met the widow of Charles Stuart, the young Chevalier, in Florence; and had conversed with Napoleon in Elba. He knew Cavour and Bismarck. He was now an ally of Daniel O'Connell, and now of Cobden and Bright. He was the close friend of Thomas Moore; he knew Byron, and was one of the few allowed to read the personal memoirs, which were unfortunately destroyed by Byron's friends. Lord John Russell had tastes for literature, for art, for philosophy, for history, for politics, and his æstheticism had the advantage that it made him seek the society and appreciate the worth of men of genius and letters. Thus he never remained a mere politician like Pitt or Palmerston. His public career suggests almost as strange a series of contradictions, or paradoxes, as Macaulay finds in that of Pitt. He who began with a reputation for a heat of temperament worthy of Achilles was for more than half his career regarded as a frigid and bloodless politician. In Ireland he was long known rather as the author of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill than as the early friend of Catholic Emancipation; in England as the parent of petty and abortive Reform Bills, rather than as the promoter of the one great Reform Bill.

Abroad and at home he came to be thought of as the Minister who disappointed Denmark and abandoned Poland, rather than as the earnest friend and faithful champion of oppressed nationalities. No statesman could be a more sincere and thorough opponent of slavery in all its forms and works; and yet in the mind of the American people, Lord Russell's name was for a long time associated with the idea of a scarcely-concealed support of the slave-holders' rebellion. Much of this curious contrast, this seeming inconsistency, is due to the fact that for the greater part of his public life Lord Russell's career was a mere course of see-saw between office and opposition. The sort of superstition that long prevailed in our political affairs limited the higher offices of statesmanship to two or three conventionally acceptable men on either side. If not Sir Robert Peel then it must be Lord John Russell; if it was not Lord Derby it must be Lord Palmerston. Therefore if the business of government was to go on at all, a statesman must take office now and then with men whom he could not mould wholly to his purpose, and must act in seeming sympathy with principles and measures which he would himself have little cared to originate. Lord Palmerston complained humourously in one of his later letters, that a Prime Minister could no longer have it all his own way in his Cabinet. Men were coming up who had wills and consciences, ideas and abilities of their own, and who would not consent to be the mere clerks of the Prime Minister. Great popular parties too, he might have added, were

growing up in the country with powerful leaders, men whose opinions must be taken into account on every subject even though they never were to be in office. It is easy enough to understand how under such conditions the minister who had seemed a daring Reformer to one generation might seem but a chilly compromiser to another. It is easy too to understand how the career, which at its opening was illumined by the splendid victory of the Reform Bill of 1832, should have been clouded at its close by the rather ignominious failure of the Reform Bill of 1866. The personal life of Lord Russell was consistent all through. He began as a Reformer; he ended as a Reformer. If the 'might-have beens' were not always a vanity, it would be reasonable as well as natural to regret that it was not given to Lord Russell to complete the work of 1832 by a genuine and successful measure of Reform in 1866.

CHAPTER LI.

THE REFORM AGITATION.

The Reform banner then had 'drooped over the sinking heads' of Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone, and the Liberal Administration was at an end. The Queen, of course, sent for Lord Derby. There was no one else to send for. Somebody must carry on the Queen's government; and therefore Lord Derby had no alternative but to set to work and try to form an Administration. He did not appear to have done so with much good-will. He had no personal desire to enter office once again; he had no inclination for official responsibilities. He was not very fond of work, even when younger and stronger, and the habitual indolence of his character had naturally grown with years, and just now with infirmities. There was, therefore, something of a genuine patriotic self-sacrifice in the consent which he gave to relieve the Sovereign and the country from difficulties by accepting at such a time the office of Prime Minister, and undertaking to form a Government. It was generally understood, however, that he would only consent to be the Prime Minister of an interval, and that whenever with convenience to the interests of the State some other hand could be entrusted with power, he would expect to

be released from the trouble of official life. The prospect for a Conservative Ministry was not inviting. Despite the manner in which Lord Russell's Reform Bill had been hustled out of existence, no sagacious Tory seriously believed that the new Government could do as Lord Palmerston had done; that is, could treat the whole Reform question as if it were shelved by the recent action of the House of Commons, and take no further trouble about it. Lord Derby, too, when he came to form a Government, found himself met by one unexpected difficulty. He had hoped to be able to weld together a sort of coalition Ministry, which should to a certain extent represent both sides of the House. It seemed to him only reasonable to assume that the men who had co-operated with the Conservatives so earnestly in resisting the Reform measures of the late Government, would consent to co-operate with the Conservative Ministry which their action had forced into existence. Accordingly, he had at once invited the leading members of the Adullamite party to accept places in his Administration. He was met by disappointment. The Adullamite chiefs agreed to decline all such co-operation. A leading article appeared one morning in a journal which was understood to have Mr. Lowe for one of its contributors, announcing in a solemn sentence made more solemn by being printed in capital letters, that those who had thrown out the Liberal Ministry on principle were bound to prove that they had not been animated by any ambition or self-seeking of their own. Indeed, the voice of public

opinion freely acquitted some of them of any such desire from the beginning. Mr. Lowe, for example, was always thought to be somewhat uncertain and crotchety in his views. There were not wanting persons who said that he had no set and serious political opinions at all; that he was more easily charmed by antithesis than by principle; and that he would have been at any time ready to sacrifice his party to his paradox. But no one doubted his personal sincerity; and no one was surprised that he should have declined to accept any advantage from the reaction of which he had been the guiding spirit. About the rest of the Adullamites, truth to say, very few persons thought at all. No one doubted their sincerity, for indeed no one asked himself any question on the subject. Some of them were men of great territorial influence; some were men of long standing in Parliament. But they were absolutely unnoticed now that the crisis was over. The reaction was ascribed to one man alone. There was some curiosity felt as to the course that one man would pursue; but when it was known that Mr. Lowe would not take office under Lord Derby, nobody cared what became of the other denizens of the Cave. They might take office or let it alone; the public at large were absolutely indifferent on the subject.

The session had advanced far towards its usual time of closing, when Lord Derby completed the arrangements for his Administration. Mr. Disraeli, of course, became Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons. Lord Stanley

was Foreign Secretary. Lord Cranbourne, formerly Lord Robert Cecil, was entrusted with the care of India; Lord Carnarvon undertook the Colonies; General Peel became War Minister; Sir Stafford Northcote was President of the Board of Trade; and Mr. Walpole took on himself the management of the Home Office, little knowing what a troublous business he had brought upon his shoulders. Sir John Pakington boldly assumed the control of the Admiralty, an appropriation of office to which only the epigram of a Beaumarchais could supply adequate illustration. On July 9 Lord Derby was able to announce to the Peers that he had put together his house of cards.

The new Ministry had hardly taken their places when a perfect storm of agitation broke out all over the country. The Conservatives and the Adullamites had both asserted that the working people in general were indifferent about the franchise; and a number of organisations now sprang into existence, having for their object to prove to the world that no such apathy prevailed. Reform Leagues and Reform Unions started up as if out of the ground. Public meetings of vast dimensions began to be held day after day for the purpose of testifying to the strength of the desire for Reform. The most noteworthy of these was the famous Hyde Park meeting. The Reformers of the metropolis determined to hold a monster meeting in the Park. The authorities took the very unwise course of determining to prohibit it, and a proclamation or official notice was issued to that effect. The Reformers were acting under the advice

of Mr. Edmond Beales, President of the Reform League, a barrister of some standing, and a man of character and considerable ability. Mr. Beales was of opinion that the authorities had no legal power to prevent the meeting; and of course it need hardly be said that a Commissioner of Police, or even a Home Secretary, is not qualified to make anything legal or illegal by simply proclaiming it so. The London Reformers, therefore, determined to try their right with the authorities. On July 23, a number of processions, marching with bands and banners, set out from different parts of London and made for Hyde Park. The authorities had posted notices announcing that the gates of the Park would be closed at five o'clock that evening. When the first of the processions arrived at the Park the gates were closed, and a line of policemen was drawn outside. The president of the Reform League, Mr. Beales, and some other prominent Reformers, came up in a carriage, alighted, and endeavoured to enter the Park. They were refused admittance. They asked for the authority by which they were refused; and they were told that it was the authority of the Commissioner of Police. They then quietly re-entered the carriage. It was their intention first to assert their right, and then, being refused, to try it in the regular and legal way. It was no part of their intention to make any disturbance. They seem to have taken every step which they thought necessary to guard against any breach of the peace. It was clearly their interest, as it was no doubt their desire, to have the law on their

side. They went to Trafalgar Square, followed by a large crowd, and there a meeting was extemporised, at which resolutions were passed demanding the extension of the suffrage, and thanking Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and other men who had striven to obtain it. The speaking was short; it was not physically possible to speak with any effect to so large an assemblage. Then that part of the demonstration came quietly to an end.

Meantime, however, a different scene had been going on at Hyde Park. A large and motley crowd had hung about the gates and railings. The crowd was composed partly of genuine Reformers, partly of mere sight-seers and curiosity-mongers, partly of mischievous boys, and to no inconsiderable extent of ordinary London roughs. Not a few of all sections, perhaps, were a little disappointed that things had gone so quietly off. Many of the younger lookers-on felt aggrieved exactly as the boys did, in the 'Bride of Lammermoor,' when they found that the supposed fire was not to end in any explosion after all, and that the castle had 'gane out like an auld wife's spunk.' The mere mass of people pressed and pressing round the railings would almost in any case have somewhat seriously threatened their security and tried their strength. Emerson has said that every revolution, however great, is first of all a thought in the mind of a single man. One disappointed Reformer lingering in Park Lane, with his breast against the rails, as the poetic heroine had hers, metaphorically, against the thorn, became impressed with the idea that the

barrier was somewhat frail and shaky. How would it be, he vaguely thought for a moment, if he were to give an impulse and drive the railing in? What, he wondered to himself, would come of that? The temptation was great. He shook the rails; the rails began to give way. Not that alone, but the sudden movement was felt along the line, and into a hundred minds came at once the grand revolutionary idea which an instant before had been a thought in the mind of one hitherto unimportant man. A simultaneous impulsive rush, and some yards of railing were down, and men in scores were tumbling, and floundering, and rushing over them. The example was followed along Park Lane, and in a moment half a mile of iron railing was lying on the grass, and a tumultuous and delighted mob were swarming over the Park. The news ran wildly through the town. Some thought it a revolt; others were of opinion that it was a revolution. The first day of liberty was proclaimed here—the breaking loose of anarchy was shrieked at there. The mob capered and jumped over the sward for half the night through. Flower-beds and shrubs suffered a good deal, not so much from wanton destruction as from the pure boisterousness which came of an unexpected opportunity for horse-play. There were a good many little encounters with the police; stones were thrown on the one side and truncheons used on the other pretty freely; a detachment of foot guards was kept near the spot in readiness, but their services were not required. Indeed, the mob good-humouredly cheered the soldiers whenever they

caught sight of them. A few heads were broken on both sides, and a few prisoners were made by the police; but there was no revolution, no revolt, no serious riot even, and no intention in the mind of any responsible person that there should be a riot. Mr. Disraeli that night declared in the House of Commons —half probably in jest, half certainly in earnest—that he was not quite sure whether he had still a house to go to. He found his house yet standing, and firmly roofed, when he returned home that night. London slept feverishly, and awoke next day to find things going on very much as before. Crowds hastened, half in amusement half in fear, to look upon the scene of the previous evening's turmoil. There were the railings down sure enough; and in the park was still a large idle crowd, partly of harmless sight-seers, partly of roughs, with a considerable body of police keeping order. But there was no popular rising; and London began once more to eat its meals in peace. The sudden tumult was harmlessly over, and the one personage whose impulse first shook the railings of the Park may even now console himself in his obscurity by the thought that his push carried Reform.

Nothing can well be more certain than the fact that the Hyde Park riot, as it was called, convinced her Majesty's Ministers of the necessity of an immediate adoption of the reform principle. The Government took the Hyde Park riot with portentous gravity. Mr. Beales and some of his colleagues waited upon the Home Secretary next day, for the purpose of advising him to withdraw the

military and police from the park, and leave it in the custody of the Reformers. Mr. Beales gravely lectured the Government for what they had done, and declared, as was undoubtedly the fact, that the foolish conduct of the Administration had been the original cause of all the disturbance. The Home Secretary, Mr. Walpole, a gentle and kindly man, had lost his head in the excitement of the hour. He mentally saw himself charged with the responsibility of civil strife and bloodshed. He was melted out of all self-command by the kindly bearing of Mr. Beales and the Reformers, and when they assured him that they were only anxious to help him to keep order, he fairly broke down and wept. He expressed himself with meek gratitude for their promised co-operation, and agreed to almost anything they could suggest. It was understood that the right of meeting in Hyde Park was left to be tested in some more satisfactory way at a future day, and the leaders of the Reform League took their departure undoubted masters of the situation.

All through the autumn and winter meetings were held in the great towns and cities to promote the cause of reform. They were for the most part mere demonstrations of numbers; and everyone of any sagacity knew perfectly well that it was by display of numbers the greatest effect would be produced upon the Ministry. Therefore the meetings were usually preceded by processions, and the attention of the public was turned far more to the processions than to the meetings. Hardly anyone

took the trouble to discuss what was said at the meetings; but a constant public controversy was going on about the numerical strength of the processions. A hundred witnesses on both sides of the dispute rushed to the newspapers to bear testimony to the length of time which a particular procession had occupied in passing a given point. Rival calculations were elaborately made to get at the number of persons marching which such a length of time implied, The most extraordinary differences of calculation were exhibited. It was a remarkable fact that the opponents of reform saw invariably a much smaller gathering than its supporters beheld. The calculations of the one set of observers brought out only hundreds, where those of the other resulted in thousands. A procession which one critic proved by the most elaborate and careful statistics to have contained quarter of a million of men, a rival calculator was prepared to show could not by any possibility have contained more than ten or twelve thousand. Cooler observers than the professed partisans of one side or the other, thought that the most significant feature of these demonstrations was the part taken by the organised trades associations of working men. Some of the processions were made up exclusively of the members of these organised Trades Unions. They acted in strict deference to the resolutions and the discipline of their associations. They were great in numbers, and most imposing in their silent united strength. They had grown into all that discipline and that power unpatronised by any manner of authority; unrecognised

by the law, unless indeed where the law occasionally went out of its way to try to prevent or to thwart the aims of their organisation. They had now grown to such strength that law and authority must see to make terms with them. The most extravagant rumours as to their secret doings and purposes alarmed the timid; and there can be no doubt that if a popular or social revolution were needed or were impending, the action taken by the working men's associations would have been of incalculable moment to the cause it espoused. As rank after rank of these men marched in quiet confidence through the principal streets of London, the thought must have occurred to many minds that here was an entirely new element in the calculations alike of statesmen and of demagogues, well capable of being made a new source of strength to a State under honest leadership and any really sound system of legislation, but qualified also to become a source of serious public danger, if misled by the demagogue or unfairly dealt with by the reactionary legislator. Some of these associations had supported great industrial strikes in which the judgment and the sympathies of all the classes that usually lead was against them. The capitalist and all who share his immediate interests; the employers, the rich of every kind, the aristocratic, the self-appointed public instructors, had all been against them; and they had nevertheless gone deliberately and stubbornly their own way. Sometimes they, or the cause they represented, had prevailed; often they and it had been defeated; but they had

never acknowledged a defeat in principle, and they had kept on their own course undismayed, and, as many would have put it, unconvinced and unreconciled. At this very time some of the doings of Trades Unions, or of those who took on themselves to represent the purposes of such organisations, were creating dismay in many parts of England, and were a subject of excited discussion everywhere over the country. It could not but be a matter of the gravest moment when the 'organisation of labour,' as it would once have been grandiloquently called, thus turned out of its own direct path and identified itself, its cause, its resources, and its discipline with any great political movement.

Thus in England the year passed away. Men were organising reform demonstrations on the one side and showing the futility of them on the other. The calculations as to the lengths of processions and the time occupied in passing particular street-corners or lamp-posts went on unceasing. Stout Tories vowed that the Government never would yield to popular clamour. Not a few timid Reformers hoped in their secret hearts that Lord Derby would really stand fast. Many Liberals who could admit of no hope from the Tories, were already prepared with the conviction that the Government would risk all on the resolution to deny extended suffrage to the working classes. Not a few on both sides had a strong impression that Mr. Disraeli would do something to keep his friends in power, although they did not perhaps quite suspect that he was already engaged in the work of educating his party.

While England was thus occupied, stirring events were taking place elsewhere. In the interval between the resignation of Lord Russell and the completion of Lord Derby's Ministry, the battle of Sadowa had been fought. The leadership of Germany had been decisively won by Prussia. The 'humiliation of Olmutz' had been avenged. Venetia had been added to Italy, Austria had been excluded from any share in German affairs, and Prussia and France had been placed in that position which M. Prevost-Paradol likened to that of two express trains starting along the same line from opposite directions. The complete overthrow of Austria came with the shock of a bewildering surprise upon the great mass of the English public. Faith in the military strength of Austria had survived even the evidence of Solferino. English public instructors were for the most part as completely agreed about the utter incapacity of the Prussians for the business of war as if nobody had ever heard of Frederick the Great. Not many days before Sadowa, a leading London newspaper had a description, half pitiful, half contemptuous, of the unfortunate shopboys and young mechanics of whom the Prussian army was understood to be composed, being hurried and driven along to the front to make food for powder for the well-trained legions of Austria under the command of the irresistible Benedek.

Just before the adjournment of Parliament for the recess, a great work of peace was accomplished; perhaps the only work of peace then possible which could be mentioned after the warlike business of

Sadowa without producing the effect of an anti-climax. This was the completion of the Atlantic cable. On the evening of July 27, 1866, the cable was laid between Europe and America. Next day Lord Stanley, as Foreign Minister, was informed that perfect communication existed between England and the United States by means of the thread of wire that lay beneath the Atlantic. Words of friendly congratulation and greeting were interchanged between the Queen and the President of the United States. Ten years all but a month or two had gone by since Mr. Cyrus W. Field, the American promoter of the Atlantic telegraph project, had first tried to inspire cool and calculating men in London, Liverpool, and Manchester with some faith in his project. He was not a scientific man; he was not the inventor of the principle of inter-oceanic telegraphy; he was not even the first man to propose that a company should be formed for the purpose of laying a cable beneath the Atlantic. So long before as 1845 an attempt had been made by the Messrs. Brett to induce the English Government to assist them in a scheme for laying an electric wire to connect Europe with America. A plan for the purpose was actually registered; but the Government took no interest in the project, probably regarding it as on a par with the frequent applications which are made for the countenance and help of the Treasury in the promotion of flying machines and of projectiles to destroy an enemy's fleet at a thousand miles' distance. But the achievement of the Atlantic cable was none the less as distinctly the

work of Mr. Cyrus Field as the discovery of America was that of Columbus. It was not he who first thought of doing the thing; but it was he who first made up his mind that it could be done, and showed the world how to do it, and did it in the end. The history of human invention has not a more inspiriting example of patience living down discouragement, and perseverance triumphing over defeat. The first attempt to lay the cable was made in 1857; but the vessels engaged in the expedition had only got about three hundred miles from the west coast of Ireland when the cable broke, and the effort had to be given up for that year. Next year the enterprise was renewed upon a different principle. Two ships of war, the 'Agamemnon,' English, and the 'Niagara,' American, sailed out together for the Mid-Atlantic where they were to part company, having previously joined their cables, and were each to make for her own shore, each laying the line of wire as she went. Stormy weather arose suddenly and prevented the vessels from doing anything. The cable was broken several times in the effort to lay it, and at last the expedition returned. Another effort, however, was made that summer. The cable was actually laid. It did for a few days unite Europe and America. Messages of congratulation passed along between the Queen and the President of the United States. The Queen congratulated the President upon 'the successful completion of the great international work,' and was convinced that 'the President will unite with her in fervently hoping that the electric cable which now

connects Great Britain with the United States, will prove an additional link between the nations whose friendship is founded in their common interest and reciprocal esteem.' The rejoicings in America were exuberant. Suddenly, however, the signals became faint; the messages grew inarticulate, and before long the power of communication ceased altogether. The cable became a mere cable again; the wire that spoke with such a miraculous eloquence had become silent. The construction of the cable had proved to be defective, and a new principle had to be devised by science. Yet something definite had been accomplished. It had been shown that a cable could be stretched and maintained under the ocean more than two miles deep and two thousand miles across. Another attempt was made in 1865, but it proved again a failure, and the shivered cable had to be left for the time in the bed of the Atlantic. At last, in 1866 the feat was accomplished, and the Atlantic telegraph was added to the realities of life. It has now become a distinct part of our civilised system. We have ceased to wonder at it. We accept it and its consequent facts with as much composure as we take the existence of the inland telegraph or the penny post. It seems hard now to understand how people got on when it took a fortnight to receive news from the United States. Since the success of the Atlantic cable many telegraphic wires have been laid in the beds of oceans. All England chafed as at an insufferable piece of negligence on the part of somebody the other day, when it was found in a moment of national

emergency that there was a lack of direct telegraphic communication between this country and the Cape of Good Hope, and that we could not ask a question of South Africa and have an answer within a few minutes. Perhaps it may encourage future projectors and inventors to know, that in the case of the Atlantic cable as in that of the Suez Canal, some of the highest scientific authority was given to proclaim the actual hopelessness, the wild impracticability, the sheer physical impossibility of such an enterprise having any success. 'Before the ships left this country with the cable,' wrote Robert Stephenson in 1857, 'I very publicly predicted as soon as they got into deep water a signal failure. It was in fact inevitable.' Nine years after, the inevitable had been avoided; the failure turned to success.

CHAPTER LII.

THE LEAP IN THE DARK.

The autumn and winter of agitation passed away, and the time was at hand when the new Ministry must meet a new session of Parliament. The country looked with keen interest, and also with a certain amused curiosity, to see what the Government would do with Reform in the session of 1867. When Lord Derby took office he had not in any way committed himself and his colleagues against a Reform Bill. On the contrary, he had announced that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to see a very considerable proportion of the now excluded class admitted to the franchise; but he had qualified this announcement by the expression of a doubt whether any measure of Reform on which the two great political parties could agree would be likely to satisfy the extreme Reformers, or to put a stop to agitation. More than once Lord Derby had intimated plainly enough that he was willing to make one other effort at a settlement of the question, but if that effort should not succeed he would have nothing more to do with the matter. He was well known to have taken office reluctantly, and he gave it to be clearly understood

that he did not by any means propose to devote the remainder of his life to the business of rolling Reform Bills a little way up the Parliamentary hill merely in order to see them rolled down again. Most persons assumed, however, that Mr. Disraeli would look at the whole question from a different point of view; that he had personal and natural ambition still to gratify; and that he was not likely to allow the position of his party to be greatly damaged by any lack of flexibility on his part. The Conservatives were in office, but only in office; they were not in power. The defection among the Liberals, and not their own strength or success, had set the Tories on the Ministerial benches. They could not possibly keep their places there without at least trying to amuse the country on the subject of Reform. The great majority of Liberals felt sure that some effort would be made by the Government to carry a bill, but their general impression was that it would be a measure cleverly put together with the hope of inducing the country to accept shadow for substance; and that nothing would come of it except an interval during which the demand of the unenfranchised classes would become more and more earnest and impassioned. It had not entered into the mind of anyone to conceive that Lord Derby's Government were likely to entertain the country by the odd succession of surprises which diversified the session, and to assist at the gradual formation, by contribution from all sides, sets, and individuals, of a Reform measure far more broadly liberal and democratic than anything which

Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone would have ventured or cared to introduce.

Parliament opened on February 5. The Speech from the Throne alluded, as everyone had expected that it would, to the subject of Reform. 'Your attention,' so ran the words of the speech, 'will again be called to the state of the representation of the people in Parliament;' and then the hope was expressed that 'Your deliberations, conducted in a spirit of moderation and mutual forbearance, may lead to the adoption of measures which, without unduly disturbing the balance of political power, shall freely extend the elective franchise.' The hand of Mr. Disraeli, people said, was to be seen clearly enough in these vague and ambiguous phrases. How, it was asked, can the franchise be freely extended, in the Reformer's sense, without disturbing the balance of political power unduly, in Mr. Disraeli's sense? Again and again, in session after session, he had been heard arguing that a great enlargement of the suffrage to the working classes must disturb the balance of political power; that it would in itself be a disturbance of the balance of political power; that it would give an immense preponderance to a class 'homogeneous'—such was Mr. Disraeli's own favourite word—in their interests and fashions. How then could he now offer to introduce any such change? And what other change did anyone want? What other change would satisfy anybody who wanted a change at all? More and more the conviction spread that Mr. Disraeli would only try to palm off some worthless

measure on the House of Commons, and by the help of the insincere Reformers and the Adullamites, endeavour to induce the majority to accept it. People had little idea, however, of the flexibility the Government were soon to display. The history of Parliament in our modern days, or indeed in any days that we know much of, has nothing like the proceedings of that extraordinary session.

On February 11 Mr. Disraeli announced that the Government had made up their minds to proceed 'by way of resolution.' The great difficulty, he explained, in the way of passing a Reform Bill was that the two great political parties could not be got to agree beforehand on any principles by which to construct a measure. 'Let us then, before we go to work at the construction of a Reform Bill this time, agree among ourselves as to what sort of measure we want. The rest will be easy.' He, therefore, announced his intention to put into the parliamentary caldron a handful of resolutions, out of which, when they had been allowed to simmer, would miraculously arise the majestic shape of a good Reform Bill made perfect. Mr. Disraeli relied greatly on the example afforded by the construction of the new system of government for India as an encouragement to the course he now recommended. We have seen that after the suppression of the Indian Mutiny there was much difficulty felt about the creation of a new scheme for the government of India. The House of Commons then agreed to proceed carefully by way of resolution in the first instance, and thus got the

principles on which they proposed to govern India completely settled before they set about embodying them in practical legislation. Only the curious ingenuity of Mr. Disraeli's mind could have discovered any resemblance between the two cases. When Parliament had to take on itself the government of India, the first difficulty was to settle the principles on which India could best be governed. It was not a question of party; one party was as much in a difficulty as another; neither was pledged to any particular course. It was a time for consultation, for the hearing of all opinions, for the consideration and comparison of all testimonies and suggestions. It was, in short, a time of novelty and of uncertainty, when the only reasonable course was for the two great parties to take informal counsel before either committed itself to any defined scheme or even principle of action. What resemblance did such a condition of things bear to that in which Parliament found itself now that it had to consider the subject of an extended franchise? The difficulty arose not from a lack of knowledge, but from the existence of different opinions and different principles. All that could be got at in the way of information had been times out of mind showered out over the whole subject of Reform. It had been discussed down to the very dregs in Parliament after Parliament. Neither of the two great political parties wanted more information of any kind, but both having long been in possession of all the information accessible to the quest of man, they were unable to agree as to the course which ought

to be taken, and differed absolutely in their political principles. One party was pledged by its traditions and its supposed interests to oppose a popular suffrage; the other was pledged in exactly the same way to support it. What possible chance was there of a common ground being found by the discussion of a series of resolutions? If either party was willing to compromise, it had only to say so; two sentences would sufficiently explain what the compromise was to be. Each saw as distinctly as the other what it wanted to have; if either was willing to renounce any part of its supposed claim, it would be enough to say so. A suitor asks for a girl in marriage; her father refuses to consent. Would the two be brought any nearer to an agreement if they were to hold a solemn conference, and draw up a series of resolutions setting forth what in the opinion of each were the true conditions of a happy union? Just as well might Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Bright have set about drawing up a series of resolutions to embody what each thought of the conditions of a Reform Bill.

The resolutions which Mr. Disraeli proposed to submit to the House were for the most part sufficiently absurd. Some of them were platitudes which it could not be worth anyone's while to take the trouble of affirming by formal resolution. What advantage could there be in declaring by resolution that 'it is contrary to the constitution of this realm to give to any one class or interest a predominating power over the rest of the community?' Who ever said, or was likely to say, that to give one class a

preponderating power over the rest of the community was in accordance with the principles of the Constitution? Even if Jack Cade were prepared to demand such a power for his own class, he would not take the trouble of trying to convince people that it could be done in conformity with the existing principles of the Constitution. To what purpose was the House of Commons invited to declare that in any redistribution of seats the main consideration should be 'the expediency of supplying representation to places not at present represented, and which may be considered entitled to that privilege'? What other main consideration could any sane person have in preparing a scheme for the redistribution of seats? It would be as wise to recommend the judges of our civil courts to declare by a formal resolution, that their main consideration in hearing causes should be to allow litigants an opportunity of setting forth their claims and obtaining justice. But then on the other hand it has to be observed that most of the resolutions which were not simple truisms embodied propositions such as no Prime Minister could possibly have expected the House to agree on without violent struggles, determined resistance, and eager divisions. The principle of rating as a basis of qualification. the device of plurality of votes, the plan of voting by means of polling-papers—these were some of the propositions which Mr. Disraeli calmly suggested that the House should affirm along with the declarations that one party ought not to have all the power, and that the object of redistribution was to redistribute

properly. The Liberal party, especially that section of it which acknowledged the authority of Mr. Bright, would have had to be beaten to its knees before it would consent to accept some of these devices.

Mr. Disraeli seems to have learned almost at once, from the demeanour of the House, that it would be hopeless to press his resolutions. On February 25 he quietly substituted for them a sort of Reform Bill, which he announced that the Government intended to introduce. The occupation franchise in boroughs was to be reduced to six pounds, and in counties to twenty pounds, in each case the qualification to be based on rating; that is, the right of a man to vote was to be made dependent on the arrangements by his local vestry or other rate-imposing body. There were to be all manner of 'fancy franchises.' A man who had fifty pounds in the funds, or had thirty pounds in a savings' bank and had kept that amount untouched for a year, was to be rewarded with the vote. If he had given a ten-pound note to his daughter to buy her wedding clothes; or had laid out five pounds in the burial of a poor and aged parent; or lent a sovereign to a friend in distress, he would of course be disfranchised by his improvidence. If he paid twenty shillings in direct taxes during the year he was to have a vote. If he bore the degree of a University, or was a minister of religion, a lawyer, a doctor, or a certified schoolmaster, he was to have the franchise: a whimsical sort of educational franchise which would have refused a vote to Mr. Bright, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Mill, or to Mr. Disraeli himself. There

seemed something unintelligible, or at least mysterious, about the manner in which this bill was introduced. It was to all appearance not based upon the resolutions; certainly it made no reference to some of the more important of their provisions. We need not go into the plan of redistribution which was tacked to the bill; for the bill itself never had any substantial existence. The House of Commons received with contemptuous indifference Mr. Disraeli's explanation of its contents, and the very next day Mr. Disraeli announced that the Government had determined to withdraw it, to give up at the same time the whole plan of proceeding by resolution, and to introduce a real and substantial Reform Bill in a few days.

Parliament and the public were amazed at these sudden changes. The whole thing seemed turning into burlesque. The session had seen only a few days, and here already was a third variation in the shape of the Government's reform project. To increase the confusion and scandal it was announced three or four days after that three leading members of the Cabinet—General Peel, Lord Carnarvon, and Lord Cranbourne—had resigned. The whole story at last came out. The revelation was due to the 'magnificent indiscretion' of Sir John Pakington, whose lucky incapacity to keep a secret has curiously enriched one chapter of the political history of his time. In consequence of the necessary reconstruction of the Cabinet, Sir John Pakington was transferred from the Admiralty to the War Office, and had to go down to his constituents of Droitwich for re-election. In

the fulness of his heart he told a story which set all England laughing. The Government, it would appear, started with two distinct Reform Bills, one more comprehensive and liberal, as they considered, than the other. The latter was kept ready only as a last resource, in case the first should meet with a chilling reception from the Conservatism of the House of Commons. In that emergency they proposed to be ready to produce their less comprehensive scheme. A shopman sometimes offers a customer some article which he assures him is the only thing of the kind fit to have; but if the customer resolutely declares that its price is more than he will pay, the shopman suddenly remembers that he has something of the same sort on hand which although cheaper will, he has no doubt, be found to serve the purpose quite as well. So the chiefs of the Conservative Cabinet had their two Reform Bills in stock. If the House should accept the extensive measure, well and good; but in the event of their drawing back from it, there was the other article ready to hand, cheaper to be sure, and not quite so fine to look at, but a very excellent thing in itself, and warranted to serve every purpose. The more liberal measure was to have been strictly based on the resolutions. The Cabinet met on Saturday, February 23, and then, as Sir John Pakington said, he and others were under the impression that they had come to a perfect understanding; that they were unanimous; and that the comprehensive measure was to be introduced on Monday, the 25th. On that Monday, however, the Cabinet were hastily sum-

moned together. Sir John rushed to the spot, and a piece of alarming news awaited him. Some leading members of the Cabinet had refused point blank to have anything to do with the comprehensive bill. Here was a coil! It was two o'clock. Lord Derby had to address a meeting of the Conservative party at half-past two. Mr. Disraeli had to introduce the bill, some bill, in the House of Commons at half-past four. Something must be done. Some bill must be introduced. All eyes, we may suppose, glanced at the clock. Sir John Pakington averred that there were only ten minutes left for decision. It is plain that no man, whatever his gift of statesmanship or skill of penmanship, can draw up a complete Reform Bill in ten minutes. Now came into full light the wisdom and providence of those who had hit upon the plan of keeping a second-class bill, if we may use such an expression, ready for emergencies. Out came the second-class bill, and it was promptly resolved that Mr. Disraeli should go down to the House of Commons and gravely introduce that, as if it were the measure which the Government had all along had it in their minds to bring forward. Sir John defended that resolution with simple and practical earnestness. It was not a wise resolve, he admitted; but who can be certain of acting wisely with only ten minutes for deliberation? If they had had even an hour to think the matter over, he had no doubt, he said, that they would not have made any mistake. But what skills talking?—they had not an hour, and there was an end of the matter. They had to do

something; and so Mr. Disraeli brought in his second-class measure; the measure which Sir John Pakington's piquant explanation sent down into political history with the name of 'the Ten Minutes' Bill.'

The trouble arose, it seems, in this way. General Peel at first felt some scruples about the original measure, the comprehensive bill. Lord Cranbourne pressed him to give the measure further consideration, and General Peel consented. So the Cabinet broke up on the evening of Saturday, February 23, in seeming harmony. Next day, however, being Sunday, Lord Cranbourne, having probably nothing else to do, bethought him that it would be well to look a little into the details of the bill. He worked out the figures, as he afterwards explained, and he found that according to his calculation they would almost amount to household suffrage in some of the boroughs. That would never do, he thought; and so he tendered his resignation. This would almost, as a matter of course, involve other resignations too. Therefore there came the hasty meeting of the Cabinet on Monday, the 25th, which Sir John Pakington described with such unconscious humour. Lord Cranbourne, and those who thought with him, were induced to remain, on condition that the comprehensive bill should be quietly put aside, and the ten minutes' bill as quietly substituted. Unfortunately, the reception given to the ten minutes' bill was, as we have told already, utterly discouraging. It was clear to Mr. Disraeli's experienced eye that it had not a chance from either side of the House. Mr. Dis-

raeli made up his mind, and Lord Derby assented. There was nothing to be done but to fall back on the comprehensive measure. Unwilling colleagues must only act upon their convictions and go. It would be idle to secure their co-operation by persevering farther with a bill that no one would have. Therefore it was that on February 26 Mr. Disraeli withdrew his bill of the day before, the ten minutes' bill, and announced that the Government would go to work in good earnest, and bring in a real bill on March 18. This proved to be the bill based on the resolutions; the comprehensive bill, which had been suddenly put out of sight at the hasty meeting of the Cabinet on Monday, February 25, as described in the artless and unforgotten eloquence of Sir John Pakington's Droitwich speech. Then General Peel, Lord Carnarvon, and Lord Cranbourne resigned their offices. Lord Carnarvon explained that he did not object to have the franchise lowered, but he objected to a measure which seemed to him to leave all the political power divided between the rich and the poor, reducing to powerlessness the influence of all the intervening classes. The objection of Lord Cranbourne has already been explained. General Peel, a man of straightforward, honourable character, and good abilities, was opposed to what he regarded as the distinctly democratic character of the bill. For the second time within ten years a Conservative Cabinet had been split up on a question of Reform and the Borough Franchise.

It must be owned that it required some courage

and nerve on Mr. Disraeli's part to face the House of Commons with another scheme and a newly-constructed Cabinet, after all these surprises. The first thing to do was to reorganise the Cabinet by getting a new War Secretary, Colonial Secretary, and Secretary for India. Before March 8 this was accomplished. The men who had resigned carried with them into their retirement the respect of all their political opponents. During his short administration of India, Lord Cranbourne had shown not merely capacity, for that everyone knew he possessed, but a gravity, self-restraint, and sense of responsibility, for which even his friends had not previously given him credit. Sir John Pakington, as we have already mentioned, became War Minister, Mr. Corry succeeding him as First Lord of the Admiralty. The Duke of Buckingham—the Lord Chandos whose maiden speech, in the great debate of Thursday, June 25, 1846, which closed the Peel Administration, Mr. Disraeli has described in his 'Lord George Bentinck'—became Colonial Secretary. The administration of the India Department was transferred to Sir Stafford Northcote, whose place at the head of the Board of Trade thus vacated was taken by the Duke of Richmond.

Then, having thrown their mutineers overboard, the Government went to work again at their Reform scheme. On March 18 Mr. Disraeli introduced the bill. As regarded the franchise, this measure proposed that in boroughs all who paid rates, or twenty shillings a year in direct taxation, should have the

vote; and also that property in the funds and savings' banks, and so forth, should be honoured with the franchise; and that there should be a certain educational franchise as well. The clauses for the extension of the franchise were counterbalanced and fenced around with all manner of ingeniously devised qualifications to prevent the force of numbers among the poorer classes from having too much of its own way. There was a disheartening elaborateness of ingenuity in all these devices. The machine was far too daintily adjusted; the checks and balances were too cleverly arranged by half; it was apparent to almost every eye that some parts of the mechanism would infallibly get out of working order, and that some others would never get into it. Mr. Bright compared the whole scheme to a plan for offering something with one hand and quietly withdrawing it with the other. There was, however, one aspect of the situation which to many Reformers seemed decidedly hopeful. It was plain to them now that the Government were determined to do anything whatever in order to get a Reform Bill of some kind passed that year. They would have anything which could command a majority rather than nothing. Lord Derby afterwards frankly admitted that he did not see why a monopoly of Reform should be left to the Liberals; and Mr. Disraeli had clearly made up his mind that he would not go out of office this time on a Reform Bill. How little idea some of his colleagues had of whither they were drifting may be understood from a speech made by Lord Stanley on March 5, after the

resignation of Lord Cranbourne and the others. If, he said, Mr. Lowe, or any of those who sat near him, believed seriously 'that it is the intention of the Government to bring in a bill which shall be in accordance with the view which has always been so ably and so consistently advocated by the member for Birmingham (Mr. Bright), they are greatly mistaken.' It will be seen before long that the Government consented to carry a measure going much farther in the direction of democracy than anything that had been ably and consistently advocated by the member for Birmingham. Mr. Disraeli himself could not possibly have had any idea at first of the length to which he would be induced to go. He told Lord Cranbourne, and with especial emphasis, at one stage of the debates, that the Government would never introduce household suffrage pure and simple. The bill became in the end a measure to establish household suffrage pure and simple in the towns.

The leading spirits of the Government were now determined to carry a Reform Bill that session, come what would. They were partly influenced, no doubt, by the conviction that it was better to settle the question on some terms, once for all, and let the country have done with it. But, as they themselves avowed more than once, they were also influenced by the idea that if the country would have Reform, the men in office might as well keep in office and give it to them. This is not high-minded statesmanship, to be sure; but high-minded statesmanship not uncommonly conducts men out of office, instead of keeping them in it.

One by one, all Mr. Disraeli's checks, balances, and securities were abandoned. The dual vote, a proposal to give a double voting power in boroughs to a ratepaying occupier who also paid 20*s.* of assessed taxes, was laughed out of the bill. The voting-paper principle was abandoned. The fancy franchises were swept clear away. A lodger franchise was introduced. At last it came to a struggle about the nature of the main franchise in boroughs. The bill fixed it that anyone rated to the relief of the poor in a borough should have the vote, provided that he had lived two years in the house for which he was rated. An amendment, reducing the two years of qualification to one, was carried in the teeth of the Government by a large majority. The Government, therefore, agreed to accept the amendment. At various stages of the bill Mr. Disraeli kept announcing that if this or that amendment were carried against the Government, the Government would not go any farther with the bill; but when the particular amendment was carried, Mr. Disraeli always announced that Ministers had changed their minds after all, and were willing to accept the new alteration. At last this little piece of formality began to be regarded by the House as mere ceremonial. The borough franchise was now reduced to household suffrage with a qualification; but that qualification was one of great importance. If Mr. Disraeli could succeed in inducing the House to admit the qualification, he would have good reason to say that he had kept his promise to Lord Cranbourne, and that he had

not consented to accept household suffrage pure and simple. The clause as it now stood excluded from the franchise the compound householder. The compound householder figures largely in the debates of that session. The controversialists on both sides battled for him, and around him, like the Greeks and Trojans fighting round the body of Patroclus. He sprang at once into prominence and into history. He and his claims were the theme of discussion and conversation everywhere. Those who did not know what the compound householder was could not possibly have understood the Reform debates of 1867. The story goes that a witty public man being asked by a French friend to explain who the compound householder was, described him as the male of the *femme incomprise*. The compound householder in plain fact was the occupier of one of the small houses the tenants of which were not themselves rated to the relief of the poor. By certain Acts of Parliament the owners of small houses were allowed to compound for their rates. The landlord became himself responsible to the parochial authorities, and not the tenant. He paid up the rates on a number of those tenements, and he received a certain reduction in consideration of his assuming the responsibility and saving the local authorities the trouble of collecting by paying up the amounts in a lump sum. As a matter of fact it need hardly be said that the occupier did actually pay the rates; for the landlord took good care to add the amount in each case to the rent he demanded; but the occupier's name did not appear on the rate-

book, nor had he any direct dealing with the parish authorities. The compound householders were so numerous that they were said actually to constitute two-thirds of all the occupiers under 10*l*. In some boroughs, it was stated, an occupier's franchise excluding compound householders would suddenly reduce with sweeping hand the number of existing voters, and the Reform Bill of Lord Derby's Government would be a disfranchising, instead of an enfranchising, measure.

A meeting of the Liberal party was held at Mr. Gladstone's house to decide upon the course which should be taken. Mr. Gladstone had a device of his own to meet the difficulty. His idea was that a line should be drawn, below which houses should not be rated in any form; but that in every case where a house was rated, the occupier should be entitled to a vote, whether he or his landlord paid the rates. Mr. Gladstone was anxious that the very poorest occupiers should at once be relieved of the obligation to pay rates, and not allowed to give a vote. He, and Mr. Bright as well, were haunted by the fear of carrying the vote down too low in the social scale, and introducing to the franchise that class which Mr. Bright described as the *residuum* of the constituency. Now it must be remembered that the Liberal party, if they acted together, could command a majority. They were, therefore, in a position to compel Mr. Disraeli to adopt the principle recommended by Mr. Gladstone. But a remarkable difference of opinion suddenly sprang up. After the meeting at Mr. Glad-

stone's house a group made up principally of the more advanced Liberals began to doubt the advantage of Mr. Gladstone's proposed low-water line. They thought it would be better to let all householders in boroughs have the vote without distinction. They held a meeting of their own in the tea-room of the House of Commons, and they resolved to inform Mr. Gladstone that they could not support his amendment. They were known from that time forth as the 'Tea-Room Party;' and they came in for nearly as much condemnation as if they had been concerned in a new Gunpowder Plot. By their secession Mr. Gladstone's scheme was defeated, and it was made certain that there were not to be two classes of householders, the rated and the unrated, in the boroughs. A bold attempt was made then to get rid of the compounding system altogether; and at length, to the surprise of all parties, the Government yielded to the pressure. They undertook to abolish the system absolutely, to have the name of every occupier put on the rate-book, to give every occupier the vote, and, in a word, to establish household suffrage pure and simple in the borough constituencies. The Tea-Room Party had conquered both ways. They had prevailed against Mr. Gladstone, and prevailed over Mr. Disraeli.

Many hard words, as we have said, were flung at the Tea-Room Party. Mr. Bright denounced them in severe and scornful language, and asked what could be done in Parliamentary politics if every man was to pursue his own little game? 'A costermonger and

donkey,' Mr. Bright said, 'would take a week to travel from here to London' (he was addressing a meeting in Birmingham); 'and yet, by running athwart the London and North-Western line, they might bring to total destruction a great express train.' 'Thus,' he went on to say, 'very small men, who during their whole political lives have not advanced the question of Reform by one hair's-breadth, or by one moment in time, can at a critical hour like this throw themselves athwart the objects of a great party, and mar, it may be, a great measure that ought to affect the interests of the country beneficially for all time.' The Tea-room Party ventured, no doubt, upon a serious Parliamentary responsibility when they thus struck out a little policy for themselves independently of their leaders. Yet it can hardly be questioned now that they were in the right as regards their principle. It was a great advantage to get rid of all complications, and all various graduations of franchise, and come at once to the intelligible point of household suffrage. As Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright had themselves admitted and argued at various stages of the debates, it was decidedly objectionable to have the question of franchise mixed up with varying parochial arrangements of any kind, and left to depend on the views of a vestry here and a vestry there. Nor were the Tea-room Party mutineers who by their conduct had enabled the enemy to triumph. On the contrary, they were at the worst only adventurous volunteers who at some risk had won a more decided victory

over the enemy than their regular chiefs once ventured to think possible. Certain of them were, perhaps, a little inclined to give themselves airs, because of the risk they had run and the success they had won. But it is only justice to some of them at least to say, that they had acted from deliberate calculation as well as from a sense of duty. They were convinced that the Government, if pressed, would give in to anything rather than allow the bill to be defeated; and they thought they saw a sudden and secure opportunity for establishing the borough franchise at once on the sound and simple basis of household suffrage.

The struggle now was practically over. The bill had become from a sham a reality; from unmeaning complication it had grown into straightforward clearness. It accomplished a great purpose by establishing a sound principle. It had gone much farther in the way of pure democracy than Mr. Bright had ever proposed, or probably ever desired, to go. During the discussions Mr. Mill introduced an amendment to admit women who were registered occupiers as well as men to the franchise; in other words, to make the qualification one of occupation only, without reference to sex. The majority of the House were at first disposed to regard this proposition as something merely droll, and to deal with it only in the spirit of pleasantry, and with facetious commentary; but the debate proved a very interesting, grave, and able discussion, and it was the opening of a momentous chapter of political controversy. Mr. Mill got seventy-three

members to follow him into the lobby; and although 196 voted the other way, he was probably well content with the result of the debate. He also raised the question of the representation of minorities, but he did not press it to any positive test. It had, however, a certain distinct triumph before the completion of the measure. When the bill went up to the House of Lords, Lord Cairns moved an amendment to the effect that in places returning three members no elector should vote for more than two. This amendment was carried, although Mr. Disraeli had announced beforehand that the Government thought such an arrangement would be 'erroneous in principle and pernicious in practice;' and although it had been strongly opposed by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright. The new principle, it will be seen, acknowledges the propriety of securing a certain proportion of representation to minorities. In a constituency with three representatives each elector votes for only two. Obviously, then, the third is the representative of a minority. It does not by any means follow, however, that he is always the representative of a minority differing in political opinions from the majority. In some of the constituencies to which the bill gave three members, it so happens that there is a majority of one way of thinking large enough to secure the return of all three members. There are electors enough of one party to secure a majority to the two candidates who are especially popular, and yet to spare as many votes as will enable them to carry a third candidate also. Thus the new prin-

ciple does not in practice always accomplish the object for which it was intended. Indeed, it is plain that in the very instances in which the advocates of the representation of minorities would most desire to secure it—those of places where the minority had before no chance of obtaining any expression of their views—they would still have little chance under the new arrangement, and would be most easily overborne by combination, discipline, and skill on the part of the majority. The new arrangement was of moment, however, as the first recognition of a principle which may possibly yet have a fuller development, and which if it does can hardly fail to have a serious effect on the present system of government by party. One or two clauses of some importance, not bearing on the general question of Reform, were introduced. It was established that Parliament need not dissolve on the death of the Sovereign, and that members holding places of profit from the Crown need not vacate their seats on the acceptance of another office; on their merely passing from one department to another. This was a reasonable and judicious alteration. It is of great importance that when a member of Parliament joins an Administration, he should give his constituents an opportunity of saying whether they are content to be represented by a member of the Government. But when they have answered that question in the affirmative, it can hardly be necessary to undergo the cost and trouble of a new election if their representative happens to be transferred from one office to another. A consti-

tuency may have good reason for refusing to elect a member of the Administration; but they can hardly have any good reason for rejecting a Secretary for the Colonies whom they were willing to retain as their representative while he was Secretary for India. We are glad, however, that the change in the law was not made a little sooner. History could ill have spared Sir John Pakington's speech at his re-election for Droitwich.

The Reform Bill passed through its final stage on August 15, 1867. We may summarise its results thus concisely. It enfranchised in boroughs all male householders rated for the relief of the poor, and all lodgers resident for one year, and paying not less than 10*l.* a year rent; and in counties, persons of property of the clear annual value of 5*l.*, and occupiers of lands or tenements paying 12*l.* a year. It disfranchised certain small boroughs, and reduced the representation of other constituencies; it created several new constituencies; among others the borough of Chelsea and the borough of Hackney. It gave a third member to Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Leeds; it gave a representative to the University of London. It enacted that where there were to be three representatives, each elector should vote for only two candidates; and that in the City of London, which has four members, each elector should only vote for three. The Irish and Scotch Reform Bills were put off for another year. We may, however, anticipate a little, and dispose of the Scotch and Irish Bills at once, the more especially as both,

but especially the Irish Bill, proved to be very trivial and unsatisfactory. The Scotch Bill gave Scotland a borough franchise the same as that of England; and a county franchise based either on 5*l.* clear annual value of property, or an occupation of 14*l.* a year. The Government proposed at first to make the county occupation franchise the same as that in England. All qualification as to rating for the poor was, however, struck out of the bill by amendments, the rating systems of Scotland being unlike those of England. The Government then put in 14*l.* as the equivalent of the English occupier's 12*l.* rating franchise. Some new seats were given to Scotland, which the Government at first proposed to get by increasing the number of members of the House of Commons, but which they were forced by amendments to obtain by the disfranchisement of some small English boroughs. The Irish Bill is hardly worth mentioning. It left the county franchise as it was, 12*l.*, reduced the borough franchise from 8*l.* to 4*l.*, and did nothing in the way of redistribution.

While the English Reform Bill was passing through its several stages, the Government went deliberately out of their way to make themselves again ridiculous with regard to the public meetings in Hyde Park. The Reform League convened a public meeting to be held in that park on May 6. Mr. Walpole, on May 1, issued a proclamation intended to prevent the meeting, and warning all persons not to attend it. The League took legal advice, found that their meeting would not be contrary to law, and

accordingly issued a counter-proclamation asserting their right, and declaring that the meeting would be held in order to maintain it. The Government found out a little too late that the League had strict law on their side. The law gave to the Crown control over the parks, and the right of prosecuting trespassers of any kind; but it gave the Administration no power to anticipate trespass from the holding of a public meeting, and to prohibit it in advance. The meeting was held; it was watched by a large body of police and soldiers; but it passed over very quietly, and indeed to curious spectators looking for excitement seemed a very humdrum sort of affair. Mr. Walpole, the Home Secretary, who had long been growing weary of the thankless troubles of his office at a time of such excitement, and who was not strong enough to face the difficulties of the hour, resigned his post. Mr. Walpole retained, however, his seat in the Cabinet. 'He will sit on these benches,' said Mr. Disraeli, in announcing to the House of Commons his colleague's resignation of the Home Office; 'and although not a minister of the Crown, he will be one of her Majesty's responsible advisers.' He was a man highly esteemed by all parties; a man of high principle and of amiable character. But he was not equal to the occasion when any difficulty arose, and he contrived to put himself almost invariably in the wrong when dealing with the Reform League. He exerted his authority at a wrong time, and in a wrong way; and he generally withdrew from his wrong position in somewhat too penitent and humble an atti-

tude. He strained too far the authority of his place, and he did not hold high enough its dignity. He was succeeded in office by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, who left the Poor Law Board to become Home Secretary.

The Reform Bill then was passed. The 'Leap in the Dark' was taken. Thus did the Prime Minister, Lord Derby, describe the policy of himself and his colleagues. The phrase has become historical, and its authorship is invariably ascribed to Lord Derby. It was in fact Lord Cranbourne who first used it. During the debates in the House of Commons he had taunted the Government with taking a leap in the dark. Lord Derby adopted the expression, and admitted it to be a just description of the movement which he and his Ministry had made. It is impossible to deny that the Government acted sagaciously in settling the question so promptly and so decisively; in agreeing to almost anything rather than postpone the settlement of the controversy even for another year. But one is still lost in wonder at the boldness, the audacity, with which the Conservative Government threw away in succession every principle which they had just been proclaiming essential to Conservatism, and put on Radicalism as a garment. On a memorable occasion Mr. Disraeli said that Peel caught the Whigs bathing, and walked away with their clothes. Now he himself had ventured on a still less scrupulous act of spoliation. He helped to turn the Whigs out of their clothes in order that he might get into the garments. Nothing could have been more surprising than the courage with

which he undertook the series of transformations, unless, perhaps, the elaborate simplicity with which towards the end he represented himself as one who was acting in the truest spirit of consistency. Few could help being impressed, or at least imposed upon, by the calm earnestness of his declarations. Juvenal's Greek deceived the very eyesight of the spectators by the cleverness of his personation. Mr. Disraeli was almost equally successful. The success was not, perhaps, likely to conduce to an exalted political morality. The one thing, however, which most people were thinking of in the autumn of 1867 was that the Reform question was settled at last, and for a long time. Nothing more would be heard of the unenfranchised millions and the noble working man, on the one hand; of the swart mechanic's bloody thumbs and the reign of anarchy, on the other. Mr. Lowe is entitled to the last word of the controversy. The working men, the majority, the people who live in the small houses, are enfranchised; 'we must now,' Mr. Lowe said, 'at least educate our new masters.'

CHAPTER LIII.

THE FENIAN MOVEMENT.

THE session of Parliament which passed the Reform Bill was not many days over when the country was startled by the news that a prison van had been stopped and broken open under broad day in Manchester, and two political prisoners rescued from the custody of the police. The political prisoners were Fenians. We have spoken already of the Fenian movement as one of the troubles now gathering around the path of successive Governments. It was at an early period of Lord Russell's administration that the public first heard anything substantial about the movement. On February 16, 1866, Parliament was surprised not a little by an announcement which the Government had to make. Lord Russell told the House of Lords, and Sir George Grey announced to the House of Commons, that the Government intended to suspend the *Habeas Corpus* Act in Ireland, and that both Houses of Parliament were to be called together next day for the purpose of enabling the Ministry to carry out this resolve. The next day was Saturday, an unusual day for a Parliamentary sitting at any early part of the session; unusual, indeed, when the session had only just begun. The

Government could only excuse such a summons to the Lords and Commons on the plea of absolute urgency; and the word soon went round in the lobbies that a serious discovery had been made; and that a conspiracy of a formidable nature was preparing a rebellion in Ireland. The two Houses met next day, and a measure was introduced to suspend the *Habeas Corpus* Act in Ireland, and give the Lord-Lieutenant almost unlimited power to arrest and detain suspected persons. The measure was run through its three readings in both Houses in the course of the day. The House of Lords had to keep up their sitting until the document should arrive from Osborne to authorise the Commissioners to give the Queen's assent to the bill. The Lords, therefore, having discussed the subject sufficiently to their satisfaction at a comparatively early hour of the evening, suspended the sitting until eleven at night. They then resumed, and waited patiently for the authority to come from Osborne, where the Queen was staying. Shortly before midnight the needful authority arrived, and the bill became law at twenty minutes before one o'clock on Sunday morning.

It seems almost superfluous to say that such a bill was not allowed to pass without some comment, and even some opposition, in the House of Commons. Mr. Bright made a speech which has always since been regarded as in every sense one of the very finest he ever delivered. That was the speech in which he declared his conviction that 'if the majority of the people of Ireland, counted fairly out, had their will

and had the power, they would unmoor the island from its fastenings in the deep, and move it at least two thousand miles to the west.' That was in itself a sufficiently humiliating confession for an English statesman to have to make. It was not humiliating to Mr. Bright personally; for he had always striven to obtain such legislation for Ireland as should enable her to feel that hers was a friendly partnership with England, and not a compulsory and unequal connection. But it was humbling to any Englishman of spirit and sense to have to acknowledge that after so many years and centuries of experiment and failure, the Government of England had not yet learned the way to keep up the connection between the countries without coercion acts and measures of repression in Ireland. No Englishman who puts the question fairly to his conscience will deny that if he were considering a matter that concerned a foreign country and a foreign Government, he would regard the mere fact as a condemnation of its system of rule. It would be idle to try to persuade him that it was all the fault of the Poles if the Russians had to govern by mere force in Poland; all the fault of the Venetians if the Austrians could never get beyond a mere encampment in Venetia. His strong common sense, unclouded in such a case by prejudice, would at once enable him to declare with conviction, that where, after long trial, a State cannot govern a population except by sheer force, the cause must be sought in the badness of the governing system rather than in the perversity of human nature among the governed.

Mr. Mill, who spoke in the same debate, put the matter effectively enough when he observed that if the captain of a ship, or the master of a school, has continually to have recourse to violent measures to keep crew or boys in order, we assume, without asking for further evidence, that there is something wrong in his system of management. Mr. Mill dwelt with force and justice on one possible explanation of the difficulty which English Governments seem always to encounter in Ireland. He spoke of the 'eternal political *non possumus*' which English statesmen opposed to every special demand for legislation in Ireland; a *non possumus* which, as he truly said, only means, 'We don't do it in England.'

The *Habeas Corpus* Act was, therefore, suspended once more in Ireland. The Government acknowledged that they had to deal with a new rebellion in that country. The rebellion this time might have sprung up from the ground, so suddenly did the knowledge of it seem to have come upon the vast majority of the public here. Yet there had for a long time been symptoms enough to give warning of such a movement, and it soon proved to be formidable to a degree which not many even then suspected.

The Fenian movement differed from nearly all previous movements of the same kind in Ireland, in the fact that it arose and grew into strength without the patronage or the help of any of those who might be called the natural leaders of the people. In 1798 and in 1848 the rebellion bore unmistakably what may be called the 'follow-my-leader' character.

Some men of great ability, or strength of purpose, or high position, or all attributes combined, made themselves leaders, and the others followed. In 1798 the rising had the impulse of almost intolerable personal as well as national grievance; but it is doubtful whether any formidable and organised movement might have been made but for the leadership of such men as Wolfe Tone and Lord Edward Fitzgerald. In 1848 there were such impulses as the traditional leadership of Smith O'Brien, the indomitable purpose of Mitchel, and the impassioned eloquence of Meagher. But Fenianism seemed to have sprung out of the very soil of Ireland itself. Its leaders were not men of high position, or distinguished name, or proved ability. They were not of aristocratic birth; they were not orators; they were not powerful writers. It was not the impulse of the American Civil War that engendered Fenianism; although that war had great influence on the manner in which Fenianism shaped its course. Fenianism had been in existence, in fact, although it had not got its peculiar name, long before the American War created a new race of Irishmen—the Irish-American soldiers—to turn their energies and their military inclination to a new purpose.

Agitation in the form of secret association had never ceased in Ireland. One result of prosecutions for seditious speaking and writing in Ireland is invariably the encouragement of secret combination. Whether it be right or wrong, necessary or unnecessary, to prosecute for seditious speaking or writing

in Ireland, is not a matter with which we have to concern ourselves when we make this statement. We state a fact which cannot be controverted. It is assuredly a fact to be taken into the gravest consideration by those who are entrusted with the maintenance of order. It ought at least to impress them with a sense of the necessity for being cautious how they run the risk of Government prosecutions for mere indiscretions of pen or tongue. 'When popular discontents are abroad,' said Curran, condemning the policy of the Irish Administration of his day, 'a wise Government would put them into a hive of glass; you hid them.' The suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, in consequence of the 1848 movement, led, as a matter of course, to secret association. Before the trials of the Irish leaders were well over in that year, a secret association was formed by a large number of young Irishmen in cities and towns. It was got up by young men of good character and education; it spread from town to town; it was conducted with the most absolute secrecy; it had no informer in its ranks. It had its oath of fidelity and its regular leaders, its nightly meetings, and even to a limited and cautious extent its nightly drillings. It was a failure, because in the nature of things it could not be anything else. The young men had not arms enough anywhere to render them formidable in any one place; and the necessity of carrying on their communications with different towns in profound secrecy, and by round-about ways of communication, made a prompt concerted action impossible. After

two or three attempts to arrange for a simultaneous rising had failed, or had ended only in little abortive and isolated ebullitions, the young men became discouraged. Some of the leaders went to France, some to the United States, some actually to England; and the association melted away. That was the happiest end it could possibly have had. Concerted action would only have meant the useless waste of a few scores or hundreds of brave young lives. Some years after this, the 'Phœnix' clubs began to be formed in Ireland. They were for the most part associations of the peasant class, and were on that account, perhaps, the more formidable and earnest; for the secret association of which we have already spoken was mainly the creation of young men of a certain culture who felt ashamed and disappointed that the Young Ireland movement should have ended without a more gallant display of arms. The Phœnix clubs led to some of the ordinary prosecutions and convictions; and that was all. Up to that time it did not seem to have entered into the mind of any official English statesman that such things might possibly be a consequence and not a cause. It was thought enough to put them down and punish them when they came. It was accounted an offence against law and order hardly less flagrant than that of the secret agitators themselves to ask whether, perhaps, there was not some real cause for all this agitation, with which serious statesmanship could easily deal if it only took a little honest thought and trouble. After the Phœnix associations came the Fenians. 'This

is a serious business now,' said a clever English literary man when he heard of the Fenian organisation; 'the Irish have got hold of a good name this time; the Fenians will last.' The Fenians are said to have been the ancient Irish militia. In Scott's 'Antiquary,' Hector M'Intyre, jealous for the honour and the genuineness of Ossian's songs of Selma, recites a part of one in which Ossian asks St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, whether he ventures to compare his psalms 'to the tales of the bare-armed Fenians.' There can be no doubt that the tales of the bare-armed Fenians were passed from mouth to mouth of the Celts in Ireland and the highlands of Scotland, from a time long before that at which any soothsayer or second-sighted sage could have dreamed of the landing of Strongbow and the perfidy of the wife of Breffni. There was an air of Celtic antiquity and of mystery about the name of Fenian which merited the artistic approval given to it by the impartial English writer whose observation has just been quoted. The Fenian agitation began about 1858, and it came to perfection about the middle of the American Civil War. It was ingeniously arranged on a system by which all authority converged towards one centre, and those farthest away from the seat of direction knew proportionately less and less about the nature of the plans. They had to obey instructions only, and it was hoped that by this means weak or doubtful men would not have it in their power prematurely to reveal, to betray, or to thwart the purposes of their leaders. A convention was held in America, and the

Fenian Association was resolved into a regular organised institution. A provisional government was established in the neighbourhood of Union Square, New York, with all the array and the mechanism of an actual working administration. Soon after this there began to be frequent visitations of mysterious strangers to Ireland.

The emigration of the Irish to America had introduced an entirely new element into political calculations. One of the men of 1848, who took refuge in the United States at first, and who afterwards went to Canada and became very influential there, wrote home from New York to say that 'we have the long arm of the lever here.' There was much truth in this view of the state of things. The Irish grew rapidly in numbers and in strength all over the United States. The constitutional system adopted there enabled them almost at once to become citizens of the Republic. They availed themselves of this privilege almost universally. The American political system, whatever may be thought of its various merits or defects, is peculiarly adapted to fill the populations with a quick interest in politics. There are undoubtedly certain classes among the wealthier who are so engrossed in money-making and in business as to have little time left to trouble themselves about politics; and there are many who, out of genuine or affected distaste for noisy controversy and the crowd, hold aloof deliberately from all political organisations. But the working part of the community, especially in the cities, are almost inva-

riably politicians. Every election, every political trial of strength, has its practical beginning at the primary meetings of the electors of each place. These meetings are attended largely, one might almost say mainly, by the humbler classes of voters. From the primary meeting to the fall elections, and from the ordinary fall elections to the choice of the President, the system is so adjusted as to take the humblest voter along with it. The Irish working man, who had never probably had any chance of giving a vote in his own country, found himself in the United States a person of political power, whose vote was courted by the leaders of different parties, and whose sentiments were flattered by the wire-pullers of opposing factions. He was not slow to appreciate the value of this influence in its bearing on that political question which in all the sincerity of his American citizenship was still the dearest to his heart—the condition of Ireland. In the United States—we do not say in Canada—the differences between Irishmen of different religions and factions have not much interfered with their views on purely Irish questions. Dislike of England, or at least of English governments, prevails among many Irishmen from the northern province settled in the United States, who assuredly, if they had remained at home, would have brought up their children in devotion to English rule and the traditions of the house of Orange. But of course the vast, the overwhelming majority of the Irish in America is made up of men who have come from the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Con-

naught, and whose anti-English sentiments have only become stronger and stronger in proportion to the length of time and distance that divided them from their old home. If it were to be distinctly declared that every Irishman in the United States was in his heart an enemy of England, there might probably be found instances enough the other way to discredit the literal accuracy of the assertion. But we know with what contempt Dr. Johnson spoke of the literal accuracy which replied to the statement that a certain orchard contained no fruit, by showing that it actually had three apples and four pears. To all who do not insist on that sort of accuracy it will be proper to say that, speaking generally, all the Irish population in the United States is animated by feelings of hostility to English dominion in Ireland. Filled with this feeling the Irish in the States made their political organisations the means of keeping up a constant agitation, having for its object to secure the co-operation of American parties in some designs against England. One of the great political parties into which the Northern States were divided made it a part of their electioneering business to conciliate the Irish vote in the populous cities. They professed great affection for Ireland and sympathy with Irish grievances; they gave the word of order to their American followers to patronise the Irish; their leaders were often to be seen on the platform at Irish meetings; the municipal authorities of some of the great towns took part in the Irish processions on St. Patrick's Day; more than once the American Mayor of an American city exhibited him-

self arrayed in garments of green on that anniversary. The Irish vote was at one time absolutely necessary to the democratic party in the States; and the democratic party were ready to give a seeming countenance to any scheme which happened for the moment to allure the hopes of the Irish populations. After the Civil War the feelings of almost all the political parties in the States, in the South as well as in the North, were hostile to England. At such a moment, and under such a condition of things, it cannot be matter of surprise if the hopes of the Irish populations were excited to the highest degree. The confidence felt by so many persons in this country that the *Alabama* controversy had been dropped for ever by American statesmen, had not the slightest support from the bearing or resolve of any of the great American parties. It is quite easy to imagine a condition of things just then, which would have led a light-hearted American president to try to bring together all classes of the American population in a war against England. The length of the almost indefensible Canadian frontier line would have given America the immense advantage of being able to choose her own battle-ground. Such a war would at one time have been welcomed with enthusiasm all over the States. The objections of calm and cautious minds would have been borne down and swept away in a very wave of popular passion. It is not surprising if, under such circumstances, many of the Fenian leaders in America should have thought it easy to force the hand of the Government, and to

bring on a war with England. At all events, it is not surprising if they should have believed that the American Government would put forth little effort to prevent the Fenians from using the frontier of the United States as a basis of operations against England.

The Civil War had introduced a new figure to the world's stage. This was the Irish-American soldier. He had the bright, humorous countenance of the Celt, with the peculiar litheness and military swagger of the American 'boy in blue.' He had some of the American shrewdness grafted on to his Irish love of adventure. In thousands of cases he spoke with an American accent, and had never set foot on the soil of that Ireland from which his fathers came, and which, to do him justice, he loved with a passion at once romantic and sincere. He might have fought for the North, or he might have fought for the South. He might have ranged himself under the colours borne by Thomas Francis Meagher—'Meagher of the Sword'—or he might have followed the fearless lead of 'Pat Cleburne.' Perhaps he was one of the Irish brigade who joined in the desperate charges up the heights of Fredericksburg; or perhaps he was one of the equally brave men who successfully held those heights for the South. It was all the same when the interests of Ireland came to be concerned: he was ready to forget all differences in a companionship on that question. Many of these men—thousands of them—were as sincerely patriotic in their way as they were simple and brave. It is needless

to say that they were fastened on in some instances by adventurers, who fomented the Fenian movement out of the merest and the meanest self-seeking. Men swaggered about Union Square, New York, as Fenian leaders, who had not the faintest notion of risking their own valuable lives in any quarrel more dignified than a bar-room row in the Sixth Ward—the 'Big Sixth' of New York. Some were making a living out of the organisation—out of that, and apparently nothing else. The contributions given by poor Irish hack-drivers and servant girls, in the sincere belief that they were helping to man the ranks of an Irish army of independence, enabled some of these self-appointed leaders to wear fine clothes and to order expensive dinners. Of course something of this kind is to be said of every such organisation. It is especially likely to be true of any organisation got up in a country like America, where the field of agitation is open to everybody alike, with little of authority or prescription to govern the taking of places. But in the main, it is only fair to say that the Fenian movement in the United States was got up, organised, and manned by persons who, however they may have been mistaken as to their ends and misguided as to their means, were single-hearted, unselfish, and faithfully devoted to their cause. It is necessary that this should be said somewhat emphatically; for the mind of the English public has always been curiously misled with regard to the character of the Fenian organisation. In this, as in other instances, the public conscience of England has

too often been lulled to sleep by the assurance that all who reject the English point of view must be either fools or knaves, and that there is no occasion for sensible men to take any account of their demands or their protestations. It may be well, too, to emphasize the fact that the plans of the Fenians were not by any means the fantastically foolish projects that it is the custom here to believe them. They resembled in some respects the projects of the Polish insurgents, which we have described in another chapter of this work. Like the Polish schemes they were founded on calculations which did not turn out as might have been expected, but which, nevertheless, might very easily have come right. The Polish rebellion was started in the hope that some of the European powers would come to the help of Poland; and no European power did come to its help. But there was at one time, as we know now, a very great chance indeed that such help would be strongly given. The Fenian rising was inspired by the hope that the United States and England would be at war; and we know now that they were more than once on the very verge of war. It is, we believe, quite certain that the officers were already named by the American authorities who were to have conducted an invasion of Canada. Those who did not happen to have known America and American life in the days shortly after the close of the Civil War, can have hardly any idea of the bitterness of feeling against England that prevailed then all over the States, in the South just as much as in the North. If the English Government

had peremptorily and absolutely rejected the idea of arbitration with regard to the *Alabama* claims, at any time between 1865 and 1868, it is all but certain that America would have declared war. An American invasion of Canada would have made a Fenian rising in Ireland a very different trouble from that which under the actual conditions it afterwards proved to be.

Meanwhile there began to be a constant mysterious influx of strangers into Ireland. They were strangers who for the most part had Celtic features and the bearing of American soldiers. They distributed themselves throughout the towns and villages; most of them had relatives or old friends here and there, to whom they told stories of the share they had had in the big wars across the Atlantic and of the preparations that were making in the States for the accomplishment of Irish independence. All this time the Fenians in the States were filling the columns of friendly journals with accounts of the growth of their organisation and announcements of the manner in which it was to be directed to its purpose. After a while things went so far that the Fenian leaders in the United States issued an address, announcing that their officers were going to Ireland to raise an army there for the recovery of the country's independence. Of course the Government here were soon quite prepared to receive them; and indeed the authorities easily managed to keep themselves informed by means of spies of all that was going on in Ireland. The spy system was soon flourishing in full force. Every con-

siderable gathering of Fenians had amongst its numbers at least one person who generally professed a yet fiercer devotion to the cause than any of the rest, and who was in the habit of carrying to Dublin Castle every night his official report of what his Fenian colleagues had been doing. It is positively stated that in one instance a Protestant detective in the pay of the Government actually passed himself off as a Catholic, and took the Sacrament openly in a Catholic church in order to establish his Catholic orthodoxy in the eyes of his companions. One need not be a Catholic in order to understand the grossness of the outrage which conduct like this must seem to be in the eyes of all who believe in the mysteries of the Catholic faith. Meanwhile the Head Centre of Fenianism in America, James Stephens, who had borne a part in the movement of 1848, arrived in Ireland. He was arrested in company of Mr. James Kickham, the author of many poems of great sweetness and beauty; a man of pure and virtuous character. Stephens was committed to Richmond Prison, Dublin, early in November, 1865; but before many days had passed the country was startled by the news that he had contrived to make his escape. The escape was planned with skill and daring. For a time it helped to strengthen the impression on the mind of the Irish peasantry that in Stephens there had at last been found an insurgent leader of adequate courage, craft, and good fortune.

Stephens disappeared for a moment from the stage. In the meantime disputes and dissensions had arisen

among the Fenians in America. The schism had gone so far as to lead to the setting up of two separate associations. There were of course distracted plans. One party was for an invasion of Canada; another pressed for operations in Ireland itself. The Canadian attempt actually was made. A small body of Fenians, a sort of advance-guard, crossed the Niagara river on the night of May 31, 1866, occupied Fort Erie, and drove back the Canadian volunteers who first advanced against them. For a moment a gleam of success shone on the attempt; but the United States enforced the neutrality of their frontier line with a sudden energy and strictness wholly unexpected by the Fenians. They prevented any further crossing of the river, and arrested several of the leaders on the American side. The Canadian authorities hurried up reinforcements; several Fenians were taken and shot; others recrossed the river, and the invasion scheme was over.

Then Stephens came to the front again. It was only for a moment. He had returned to New York, and he now announced that he was determined to strike a blow in Ireland. Before long the impression was spread abroad that he had actually left the States to return to the scene of his proposed insurrection. The American-Irish kept streaming across the Atlantic, even in the stormy winter months, in the firm belief that before the winter had passed away, or at the farthest while the spring was yet young, Stephens would appear in Ireland at the head of an insurgent army. Not many, surely, of those actually living in

Ireland could have had any faith in the possibility of such a movement having even a momentary success on Irish soil. All who knew anything of the condition of the country must have known that the peasantry were unarmed, and utterly unprepared for any such attempt; that the great majority of the populations everywhere were entirely opposed to such wild enterprises; that the Catholic clergy especially were endeavouring everywhere to keep their people back from secret organisation or insurrectionary scheme. But the Irish-Americans, who had made their way into Ireland, were for the most part not acquainted with the condition of the country; and it was owing to their presence and their influence that at length an attempt at rebellion was actually made. Stephens did not reappear in Ireland. He made no attempt to keep his warlike promise. He may be said to have disappeared from the history of Fenianism. But the preparations had gone too far to be suddenly stopped. Many of his followers were filled with shame at the collapse of the enterprise on which they had risked so much, and they were impatient to give some sign of their personal energy and sincerity. It was hastily decided that something should be done. One venture was a scheme for the capture of Chester Castle. The plan was that a sufficient number of the Fenians in England should converge towards the ancient town of Chester, should suddenly appear there on a given day in February, 1867, capture the castle, seize the arms they found there, cut the telegraph wires, make for Holyhead, but a short distance by rail, seize

on some vessels there, and then steam for the Irish coast. The Government were fully informed of the plot in advance; the police were actually on the look-out for the arrival of strangers in Chester, and the enterprise melted away. In March, 1867, an attempt at a general rising was made in Ireland. It was a total failure; the one thing on which the country had to be congratulated was that it failed so completely and so quickly as to cause little bloodshed. Every influence combined to minimise the waste of life. The snow fell that spring as it had scarcely ever fallen before in the soft, mild climate of Ireland. Silently, unceasingly it came down all day long and all night long; it covered the roads and the fields; it made the gorges of the mountains untenable, and the gorges of the mountains were to be the encampments and the retreats of the Fenian insurgents. The snow fell for many days and nights, and when it ceased falling the insurrectionary movement was over. The insurrection was literally buried in that unlooked-for snow. There were some attacks on police barracks in various places—in Cork, in Kerry, in Limerick, in Tipperary, in Louth; there were some conflicts with the police; there were some shots fired, many captures made, a few lives lost; and then for the time at least all was over. The Fenian attempt thus made had not from the beginning a shadow of hope to excuse it. Every patriotic Irishman of whatever party must have felt a sense of relief when it was evident that the insurrection was over and that so little harm had been done.

There was, however, much feeling in England as well as in Ireland for some of the Fenian leaders who now began to be put upon their trials. They bore themselves with manliness and dignity. Some of them had been brave soldiers in the American Civil War, and were entitled to wear honourable marks of distinction. Many had given up a successful career or a prosperous calling in the United States to take part in what they were led to believe would be the great national uprising of the Irish people. They spoke up with courage in the dock, and declared their perfect readiness to die for what they held to be a sacred cause. They indulged in no bravado and uttered no word of repining. All manhood should have deserted the English heart if the English people did not acknowledge some admiration for such men. Many did acknowledge such admiration freely and generally. The newspaper in London which most of all addresses itself to the gratification of the popular passion of the hour, frankly declared that the Fenian leaders were entitled to the respect of Englishmen because they had given such earnest of their sincerity, and such proof that they knew how to die. One of the leaders, Colonel Burke, who had served with distinction in the army of the Southern Confederation, was sentenced to death in May, 1867. A great public meeting was held in St. James's Hall, London, to adopt a memorial praying that the sentence might not be carried out. Among those who addressed the meeting was Mr. Mill. It was almost altogether an English meeting. The hall was crowded with English

working men. The Irish element had hardly any direct representation there. Yet there was absolute unanimity, there was intense enthusiasm, in favour of the mitigation of the sentence on Colonel Burke and his companions. The great hall rang with cheer after cheer as Mr. Mill, in a voice made stronger than its wont by the intensity of his emotions, pleaded for a policy of mercy. It is satisfactory to be able to say that the voice of that great meeting was heard in the ministerial councils, and that the sentence of death was not inflicted.

Not many months after this event the world was roused to amazement by the news of the daring rescue of Fenian prisoners in Manchester. Two Fenian prisoners, named Kelly and Deasy, were being conveyed in the prison van from one of the police courts to the borough gaol to await further examination. On the way the van was stopped by a number of armed Fenians, who demanded the surrender of the prisoners. They surrounded the van, and endeavoured to break in the door of it. The door was locked on the inside, and the key was in the keeping of a police officer, Brett, who sat within. A shot was fired at the keyhole, probably in the hope of blowing off the lock—this was the opinion of one at least of the police who gave evidence—and poor Brett was just in the way of the bullet. The unfortunate policeman, who was only preparing to do his duty bravely by refusing to give up his charge, and by defending his position to the last, received a wound of which he died soon after. The doors

were then opened, a woman prisoner in the van handing out the keys which she found in the pocket of the unfortunate officer; and the prisoners were rescued. 'Kelly, I'll die for you!' was the exclamation heard to be uttered by one of the Fenian rescuers. He kept his word.

The rescue was accomplished; the prisoners were hurried away, and were never after seen by English officials. The principal rescuers died for them. Several men were put on their trial for the murder of Brett. Five were found guilty; their names were Allen, Larkin, O'Brien, Condon or Shore, and Maguire. Allen was a young fellow—a mere lad under twenty. The defence was that the prisoners only meditated a rescue, and that the death of the policeman was but an accident. It should be said, also, that each of those who avowed having taken part in the rescue, denied that he had fired the fatal shot. Legally, of course, this would have availed them nothing. Shots were fired. Those who take part in an unlawful assemblage for an unlawful purpose, become responsible for the acts of their confederates. But it is worth noting as a fact that the men who gloried in the rescue, and died glorying in it, declared to the last that they had not fired the shot which killed Brett. All the five were sentenced to death. Then followed an almost unprecedented occurrence. One of the five, Maguire, had simply pleaded in his defence that he had been arrested by mistake; that he never was near the spot on the day of the rescue; that he was a loyal private in the Marines, and no

Fenian; that he never knew anything about the plot or heard of it until he was arrested. The jury convicted him along with all the others. But the reporters for the press had been so struck with the apparent genuineness of the man's defence, that they took the unprecedented step of joining in a memorial to the Government, expressing their conviction that in his case the finding of the jury was a mistake. The Government made enquiry, and it was found that Maguire's defence was a truth, and that his arrest was a mere blunder. He received a pardon at once, that being the only way in which he could be extricated from the effect of the mistaken verdict. Naturally the news of this singular miscarriage of justice threw a great doubt on the soundness of the verdict in the other cases. Many strenuous attempts were made to procure a commutation of the sentence. Mr. Bright exerted himself with characteristic energy and humanity. Mr. Swinburne, the poet, made an appeal to the people of England in lines of great power and beauty on behalf of a policy of mercy to the prisoners. Lord Derby, who had then come to be at the head of the Government, refused to listen to any appeal. He declared that it was not a political offence, but simply a murder, commonplace in everything save its peculiar atrocity. He was even ungenerous enough to declare that the act for which he had determined that the men should die was a 'dastardly' deed. This was not merely a superfluous piece of ungenerosity; it was simply a misapplication of words. A minister of the Crown might well denounce, in the strongest

language that could be made appropriate to the occasion, so lawless an act as that for which Allen and his companions were condemned; but there was no excuse for calling it dastardly. The conduct of a handful of men, who stopped a police-van in a great city and at the risk of their own lives rescued some of their political heroes from custody, proclaiming at the same time their readiness to die for the deed, might be called lawless, might even be called criminal; but, if words have any meaning at all, it could not be called dastardly. We can easily test the question, if we do not maintain the creed that the moral laws change according as they are applied by different persons. Let us suppose that, instead of the rescue of two Fenians in Manchester, Lord Derby had been talking of the rescue of two Garibaldians in Rome. Let us suppose that the Papal police were carrying off two of the followers of Garibaldi to a Roman prison, and that a few Garibaldians stopped the van in open day, and within reach of the whole force of the Papal gendarmes, broke the van open and rescued the prisoners, and that in the affray one of the Papal police was killed. Does anybody suppose that Lord Derby would have stigmatised the conduct of the rescuing Garibaldians as dastardly? Is it not more likely that, even if he yielded so far to official proprieties as to call it misguided, he would have qualified his disapprobation by declaring that it was also heroic?

One other of the five prisoners who were convicted together escaped the death-sentence. This

was Condon, or Shore, an American by citizenship if not by birth. He had undoubtedly been concerned in the attempt at rescue; but for some reason a distinction was made between him and the others. This act of mercy, in itself highly commendable, added to the bad effect produced in Ireland by the execution of the other three men; for it gave rise to the belief that Shore had been spared only because the protection of the American Government might have been invoked on his behalf. The other three, Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien, were executed. They all met death with courage and composure. It would be superfluous to say that their deaths did not discourage the spirit of Fenianism. On the contrary, they gave it a new lease of life.

Indeed, the execution of these men did not even tend to prevent crime. The excitement caused by the attempt they had made and the penalty they paid had hardly died away when a crime of a peculiarly atrocious nature was committed in the name of Fenianism. On November 23, 1867, Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien were hanged at Manchester. On December 13 an attempt was made to blow up the House of Detention at Clerkenwell. About four o'clock that day all London was startled by a shock and a sound resembling the distant throb of an earthquake or the blowing up of a powder-magazine. The explanation soon came. Two Fenian prisoners were in the Clerkenwell House of Detention, and some sympathisers outside had attempted to rescue them by placing a barrel of gunpowder close to the wall of

the prison, and exploding the powder by means of a match and a fuse. About sixty yards of the prison wall were blown in, and numbers of small houses in the neighbourhood were shattered to pieces. Six persons were killed on the spot; about six more died from the effects of the injuries they received; some hundred and twenty persons were wounded. Forty premature confinements were the consequence of the shock received by women, and twenty of the babes died in their birth. The clumsiness of the crime was only surpassed by its atrocity. Had the prisoners on whose behalf the attempt was made been near the wall at the time, they must have shared the fate of those who were victimised outside. Had they even been taking exercise in the yard, they would, in all probability, have been killed. They would have been taking exercise at the time had it not been for a warning the authorities at Scotland Yard received two days before, to the effect that an attempt at rescue was to be made by means of gunpowder and the blowing in of the wall. In consequence of this warning the governor of the prison had the prisoners confined to their cells that day; and thus, in all probability, they owed their lives to the disclosure of the secret plan which their officious and ill-omened admirers had in preparation for their rescue. Why the prison authorities and the police, thus forewarned, did not keep a sufficient watch upon the line of prison wall to prevent the possibility of any such scheme being put into execution, it passes the wit of man to comprehend. At the very time that this horrible

crime and blunder was perpetrated, one of the London theatres was nightly crowded by spectators eager to see an Irish melodrama, among the incidents of which was the discussion of a plan for the rescue of a prisoner from a castle cell. The audience were immensely amused by the proposal of one confederate to blow up the castle altogether, and the manner in which it occurred to the simple plotters, just in time, that if they carried out this plan they must send the prisoner himself flying into air. The Clerkenwell conspirators had either not seen the popular drama or had missed the point of its broadest joke.

Five men and a woman were put on trial for the crime. The Chief Justice, before whom the charge was tried, directed the withdrawal of the proceedings against the woman and one of the men, as there seemed to be no case against them. Three others were acquitted after a long trial; one man was convicted. Unfortunately for the moral effect of the conviction, the man was found guilty on the evidence of an informer; and a very strong attempt had been made to prove that the prisoner was not in London at all at the time when he was charged with the commission of the crime. A sort of official but extra-judicial enquiry took place as to the validity of the plea of *alibi*, and the result was that the Chief Justice and the authorities at the Home Office declared themselves satisfied with the verdict. Mr. Bright raised the question in the House of Commons, and urged a further delay of the execution; but he was answered with the assurance that no doubt was any longer felt

as to the propriety of the verdict. The man was executed. So far as it is possible to judge, the persons who were concerned in the plot to blow in the prison wall appear to have been of that irresponsible crew who hang on to the skirts of all secret political associations, and whose adhesion is only one other reason for regarding such associations as deplorable and baneful. Such men are of the class who bring a curse, who bring many curses, on even the best cause that strives to work in secret. They prowl after the heels of organised conspiracy, and what it will not do they are ready in some fatal moment to attempt. It would be the merest injustice to deny that among the recognised leaders of the Fenian movement were men of honourable feeling and sincere although misguided patriotism. It would be as cruel and as unjust to suppose that these men could have had any sympathy with such an outrage as that which destroyed the innocent women and children at Clerkenwell. But the political conspirator may well pause, before entering on his schemes, to reflect that an authority exercised in secret can never be sure of making itself thoroughly felt, and of preventing some desperate follower from undertaking on his own account a deed which his leaders would never have sanctioned. If no other reason existed, this thought alone might be enough to set men's hearts against secret political confederation.

It is not necessary to follow out the steps of the Fenian movement any further. There were many isolated attempts; there were many arrests, trials,

imprisonments, banishments. The effect of all this, it must be stated as a mere historical fact, was only to increase the intensity of dissatisfaction and discontent among the Irish peasantry. It is curious to notice how entirely Irish in its character the movement was, and how little sympathy it gave to or got from the movements of Continental revolution. In one or two instances some restless soldier of universal democracy found his way from the Continent to place his services at the disposal of the Fenians. The alliance was never successful. The stranger did not like the Irish; the Irish did not take to the stranger. Their ways were different. The Irish people, and more especially the Irish peasantry, failed altogether to be captivated by the prospect of the 'democratic and social republic.' They did not even understand what was meant by the vague grandeur of the phraseology which describes the supposed common cause as 'the Revolution.' Eloquence about the solidarity of peoples was lost on them. The most extreme of them only dreamed of the independence of Ireland; they had no ambition to bear a part in a general pulling down of old institutions.

The phenomena of the Fenian movement did not fail to impress some statesmanlike minds in England. There were some public men who saw that the time had come when mere repression must no longer be relied upon as a cure for Irish discontent. We know since that time that even the worst excesses of the movement impressed the mind of Mr. Gladstone with a conviction that the hour was appropriate for doing

something to remove the causes of the discontent that made Ireland restless. The impatient and silly nurse tries to stop the child's crying by beating it; a more careful and intelligent person makes a prompt investigation, and finds that a pin is sticking into the little sufferer. The English Government had for a long time been the stupid nurse to the crying child. They had tried threatening words and quick blows. The cry of complaint still was heard. It occurred at last to some men of responsible authority to seek out the cause and quietly try to remove it. While many public instructors lost themselves in vain shriekings over the wickedness of Fenianism and the incurable perversity of the Irish people, one statesman was already convinced that the very shock of the Fenian agitation would arouse public attention to the recognition of substantial grievance, and to the admission that the business of statesmanship was to seek out the remedy and provide redress.

CHAPTER LIV.

TRADES-UNIONS.

English society was much distressed and disturbed about the same time by the stories of outrages more cruel, and of a conspiracy more odious and alarming in its purpose, than any that could be ascribed to the Fenian movement. It began to be common talk that among the trades-associations there was systematic terrorising of the worst kind, and that a *Vehmgericht* more secret and more grim than any known to the middle ages was issuing its sentences in many of our great industrial communities. Ordinary intimidation had long been regarded as one of the means by which some of the trades-unions kept their principles in force. Now, however, it was common report that secret assassination was in many cases the doom of those who brought on themselves the wrath of the Trades-unions. For many years the great town of Sheffield had had a special notoriety in consequence of the outrages of the kind that were believed to be committed there. When a workman had made himself obnoxious to the leaders of some local trades-union, it occasionally happened that some sudden and signal misfortune befell him. Perhaps his house was set on fire; perhaps a canister of gunpowder was

exploded under his windows, or some rudely constructed infernal-machine was flung into his bedroom at midnight. The man himself, supposing him to have escaped with his life, felt convinced that in the attempt to destroy him he saw the hand of the union; his neighbours were of his opinion; but it sometimes happened, nevertheless, that there was no possibility of bringing home the charge upon evidence that could satisfy a criminal court. The comparative impunity which such crimes were enabled to secure made the perpetrators of them feel more and more safe in their enterprises; and the result was that outrages began to increase in atrocity, boldness, and numbers. The employers offered large rewards for the discovery of the offenders; the Government did the same; but not much came of the offers. The employers charged the local trades-unions with being the authors of all the crimes; the officials of the unions distinctly and indignantly denied the charge. In some instances they did more. They offered on their own account a reward for the detection of the criminals, in order that their own innocence might thereby be established once for all in the face of day. At a public meeting held in Sheffield to express public opinion on the subject, the secretary of one of the local unions, a man named Broadhead, spoke out with indignant and vehement eloquence in denunciation of the crimes and in protest against the insinuation that they were sanctioned by the authority or done with the connivance of the trades-organisation. Most persons who read the report of the

meeting were much impressed with the earnestness of Broadhead; and even among those who had no sympathy with the principles of unionism, there were not a few who were of opinion that Broadhead and his colleagues had been gravely wronged by the accusations made against them. On the other hand, it would seem that impartial persons who heard the speech made by Broadhead listened with a growing conviction that it was a little too virtuously indignant, and that it repudiated the idea of any appeal to force in maintaining the authority of the union somewhat more comprehensively than any recognition of known facts would warrant. At all events an appeal was made to the Government with apparently equal earnestness by the employers and by the union; and the Government resolved to undertake a full investigation into the whole condition of the Trades-unions. A Commission was appointed, and a bill passed through Parliament enabling it to take evidence upon oath. The Commissioners sent down to Sheffield three examiners, the chief of whom was Mr. Overend, a Queen's Counsel of distinction, to make enquiry as to the outrages. The examiners had authority to offer protection to anyone, even though himself engaged in the commission of the outrages, who should give information which might lead to the discovery of the conspiracy. This offer had its full effect. The Government were now so evidently determined to get at the root of all the evil, that many of those actively engaged in the commission of the crimes took fright and believed they had best consult for

their personal safety. Accordingly the Commission got as much evidence as could be desired, and it was soon put beyond dispute that more than one association had systematically employed the most atrocious means to punish offenders against their self-made laws and to deter men from venturing to act in opposition to them. The saw-grinders' union in Sheffield had been particularly active in such work, and the man named William Broadhead, who had so indignantly protested the innocence of his union, was the secretary of that organisation. Broadhead was proved to have ordered, arranged, and paid for the murder of at least one offender against his authority, and to have set on foot in the same way various deeds scarcely if at all less criminal. The crimes were paid for out of the funds of the union. There were gradations of outrage, ascending from what might be called mere personal annoyance up to the serious destruction of property, then to personal injury, to mutilation, and to death. 'Rattening' was one of the milder forms of tyranny. The tools of obnoxious workers were destroyed; machinery was spoiled. Then the houses of the obnoxious were blown up, or cans of explosive material were flung into them at night. In one instance a woman was blinded; in another a woman was killed. Men were shot at with the object of so wounding them as to prevent them from carrying on their work; one man was shot at and killed. A ghastly account was given by one sufferer of the manner in which his house was set on fire at midnight by an explosive material flung in, and how the

room and the bedcurtains flamed and blazed about him and his wife, and how he saved his wife with the utmost difficulty and at extreme risk to his own life, by tearing from her scorching body the nightdress already burning, and dropping her thus naked into the street. Broadhead himself came before the examiners and acknowledged the part he had taken in the direction of such crimes. He explained how he had devised them, organised them, selected the agents by whom they were to be committed, and paid for them out of the funds of the union. The men whom he selected had sometimes no personal resentment against the victims they were bidden to mutilate or destroy. They were ordered and paid to punish men whom Broadhead considered to be offenders against the authority and the interests of the union, and they did the work obediently. In Manchester a state of things was found to exist only less hideous than that which prevailed in Sheffield. It was among the brickmakers of Manchester that the chief offences were committed. The clay which offending brickmakers were to use was sometimes stuffed with thousands of needles, in order to pierce and maim the hands of those who unsuspectingly went to work with it. The sheds of a master who dismissed unionmen were burnt with naphtha. An obnoxious man's horse was roasted to death. Many persons were shot at and wounded. Murder was done in Manchester too. Other towns were found to be not very far distant from Sheffield and Manchester in the audacity and ingenuity of their trade outrages. During the

alarms caused by such revelations, many people began to cry out that the whole structure of our society was undermined, and that the 'organisation of labour' was simply a vast conspiracy to make capital, science, and energy the mere bondslaves of the Trades-union and of the tyrants and serfs, knaves and dupes, who kept it up.

Society, however, does not long continue in a mood for the indulgence of mere alarm and inarticulate shrieking. Society soon began to reflect that if it had heard terrible things, it had probably heard all the worst. The great majority of the trades-unions appeared after the most searching investigation to be absolutely free from any complicity in the crimes, or any sanction of them. Men of sense began to ask whether society had not itself to blame in some measure even for the crimes of the Trades-unions. The law had always dealt unfairly and harshly with the trade-associations. Public opinion had for a long time regarded them as absolutely lawless. There was a time when their very existence would have been an infraction of the law. For centuries our legislation had acted on the principle that the working-man was a serf of society, bound to work for the sake of the employer and on the employer's terms. The famous statute of labourers, passed in the reign of Edward III., declared that every person under the age of sixty not having means to live should on being required be 'bound to serve him that doth require him,' or else be committed to gaol 'until he find surety to serve.' If a workman or a

servant left his service before the time agreed upon, he was to be imprisoned. The same statute contained a section fixing the scale of wages, and declaring that no higher wages should be paid. An Act passed in the reign of Elizabeth contained provisions making the acceptance of wages compulsory, and fixing the hours and the wages of labour. A master wrongfully dismissing the servant was made liable to a fine, but a servant leaving his employment was to be imprisoned. The same principle continued to be embodied in our legislation with regard to masters and workmen, with hardly any modification, down to 1813, and indeed, to a great extent, down to 1824. Even after that time, and down to the period of which we are now writing, there was still a marked and severe distinction drawn between master and servant, master and workman, in our legislation. In cases of breach of contract the remedy against the employer was entirely civil; against the employed, criminal. A workman might even be arrested on a warrant for alleged breach of contract and taken to prison before the case had been tried. The laws were particularly stringent in their declarations against all manner of combination among workmen. Any combined effort to raise wages would have been treated as conspiracy of a specially odious and dangerous order. Down to 1825 a mere combination of workmen for their own protection was unlawful; but long after 1825 the law continued to deal very harshly with what was called conspiracy among working-men for trade purposes. The very laws which did this were

a survival of the legislation which for centuries had compelled a man to work for whomsoever chose to call on him, and either fixed his maximum of wages for him or left it to be fixed by the justices. Not many years ago it was held that although a strike could not itself be pronounced illegal, yet a combination of workmen to bring about a strike was a conspiracy, and was to be properly punished by law. In 1867, the very year when the Commission we have described held its enquiries at Sheffield and Manchester, a decision given by the Court of Queen's Bench affirmed that a friendly society, which was also a trades-union, had no right to the protection of the law in enforcing a claim for a debt. It was laid down that because the rules of the society appeared to be such as would operate in restraint of trade, therefore the society was not entitled to the protection of the civil law in any ordinary matter of account. The general objects of the Trades-union, as distinguished from those of the friendly society, were regarded as absolutely outside the pale of legal protection. It was not merely that the Trades-unions sometimes made illegal arrangements, which of course could not be recognised or enforced in any civil court. The principle was that because they, or some of them, did this sometimes, they and the whole of them, and all their transactions, were to be regarded as shut out from the protection of the civil law.

So rigidly was this principle applied to the Trades-unions that they were apparently not allowed to defend themselves against plunder by a dishonest

member. This extraordinary principle was in force for several years after the time at which we have now arrived in this history. For example, in 1869 an information was laid in Bradford against the secretary of a trades-association for having wilfully misappropriated a sum of money belonging to the society. The guilt of the man was clear, but the magistrates dismissed the charge, on the ground that the society was itself established for illegal purposes, that is, for the restraint of trade, and that therefore it was not entitled to the protection of the law. An appeal was made to the Court of Queen's Bench, and the decision was that the appeal must be dismissed, and that the society was established for illegal purposes. The judges were divided equally in opinion, and therefore, in accordance with the usage, the judgment was allowed to go in favour of the decision of the inferior court. The absurdity of such a principle of law is evident. It is proper that an illegal association should not be maintained in illegal acts; but it is hardly a principle of our law that because an association has been established for purposes which seem in opposition to some legal principle, its members may be plundered by anyone with impunity. A man who keeps a gambling-house is the proprietor of an unlawful establishment; but if a robber snatches his purse he is free to claim the protection of the police, and it is not open to the thief to rest his defence simply on the plea that the man's occupation is illegal, and that his money, if left to him, would unquestionably have been applied to unlawful pur-

poses. That illustration is, however, inadequate to express properly the injustice done to the Trades-unions. It assumes that the objects of the unions were fairly to be considered unlawful, and to be classed with the business of gaming-houses and shops for the reception of stolen goods. But in truth the main object of the Trades-unions was as strictly in accordance with public policy as that of the Inns of Court or the College of Surgeons. One result of the investigations into the outrages in Sheffield and in Manchester was that public attention was drawn directly to the whole subject; the searching light of full free discussion was turned on to it, and after a while everyone began to see that the wanton injustice of the law and of society in dealing with the associations of working-men was responsible for many of the errors and even of the crimes into which some of the worst of these associations had allowed themselves to be seduced. It is as certain as any problem in mathematics can be, that when the civil law excludes any class of persons from its full protection, that class will be easily drawn into lawlessness. 'The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law,' is a reminder that barbs the advice which bids the unfriended to be not poor but break the law which denies them its protection.

It was not, however, the law alone which had set itself for centuries against the working-man. Public opinion and legislation were in complete agreement as to the rights of Trades-unions. For many years the whole body of English public opinion outside

the working-class itself was entirely against the principle of the unions. It is, perhaps, not possible to recall to mind any question open to controversy in which public opinion was ever in our time so nearly unanimous as it was on the subject of trades-organisations. It was an axiom among all the employing and capitalist classes that trades-organisations were as much to be condemned in point of morality as they were absurd in the sight of political economy. Country squires, who had only just been converted from the public profession of protectionist principles, and who still in their secret intelligences failed to see that they were wrong; the whole tone of whose thinking was still, when left to itself, entirely protectionist, and who, the moment they ceased to keep a strict guard on their tongues, would talk protection as naturally as they talked English—such men were lost in wonder or consumed by anger at the workingman's infatuated notions on the subject of political economy. All the leading newspapers were constantly writing against the Trades-unions at one time; not writing merely as a Liberal paper writes against some Tory measure, but as men condemn a monstrous heresy. A comfortable social theory began to spring up, that all the respectable and well-conducted workmen were opposed to the unions, and all the ne'er-do-wells were on their side and in their ranks. The paid officers of the unions were described as mere cunning parasites, living on the sap and strength of the organisation. The spokesmen of the unions were set down invariably as selfish and audacious

demagogues, who incited their ignorant victims on to ruin in order that they themselves might live in comfort and revel in popular applause.

There can be no doubt that some insincere and unprincipled persons did occasionally attach themselves to the trades-organisations. Such men professed to adopt a principle in order to get money and applause. They did exactly as men do in a higher social class who profess to adopt a principle in order to get into Parliament, and then into office. But on the whole the leaders of the trades-organisations appear to have been men of sincere purpose and of good character. The officers of many of the societies worked for very small pay; for no more, in fact, than they could have got by their ordinary labour. It is also, we believe, a fact that, taken on the whole, the men in the organisations represented a much better class of workmen than those who held aloof from them. The numbers of men registered on the books of the trades-unions did not by any means represent the actual number who sympathised with unionism. Much of the business of a trades-union was simply that of an ordinary benefit society. Strikes were not always going on; the funds of the union were not often being voted to assist some mutinous brothers. By far the greater part of the occupation of a trades-union was like that of the Oddfellows or some other benefit association. A great many working-men, a considerable proportion indeed of the working population, were members of some friendly society, and had been so perhaps from their first starting into

life. Such men did not always care to give up the society to which they had been long attached, for the purpose of joining a trades-union which was usually only performing just the same functions. Therefore one mistake very commonly made by those who entered into the controversy was to count the mere numbers on the books of the trades-unions, and assume that these represented the whole strength of the movement. The numbers would have been great, and ought to have been significant, in any case; but great as they were they by no means fairly illustrated the strength of the hold which the principle of the trades-organisation had got upon the working-classes.

That sort of public opinion of which we have already spoken, well satisfied in its mind as to most things, was for many years particularly well satisfied about strikes. We can find its views expressed in every tone. Solemn disquisition and light comedy alike gave them form. Parliament, the pulpit, the press, the stage, philosophy, fiction, all were for a long time in combination to give forth one pronouncement on the subject. A strike was something always wicked and foolish; abstractly wicked; foolish to the fundamental depths of its theory. 'All I have to say,' a benevolent nobleman called out to a meeting of working-men, 'is—never strike!' That was his sincere advice: whatever happens, never strike; if you strike you must be doing wrong. To engage in a strike was, according to his view, like engaging in a conspiracy to murder. Such was long the opinion of almost all above the social level of the

workman himself. A strike was in their view an offence against all social laws, to be reprobated by every good man. It was not looked upon as a rough last resource to get at a decision in a controversy not otherwise to be settled, but simply as a crime. It was assumed as an axiom in political economy that a strike must be a wrong thing, because it wasted time and money, and could not in any way increase the wages fund of the country. 'The wages fund' was flung at the head of the erring artisan as a phrase to settle the whole question for him, and show him what a foolish man he was not to take any terms offered him. Undoubtedly a strike is under any circumstances the cause of the throwing away of time and money. But so too is a lawsuit. There can be no civil cause in which it would not have saved time and money if the parties could have come to a reasonable agreement among themselves, and avoided any appeal to the court. Prudent men do very often put up with a considerable loss rather than waste their time, spend their money, and sour their temper in a court of law. But it would be in vain to tell the meekest or the dullest man that he has no right to appeal to a civil court to enforce any claim. This was, however, practically the sermon which English public opinion kept preaching to the working-man for generations. He had often no way of asserting his claims effectively except by the instrumentality of a strike. A court of law could do nothing for him. If he thought his wages ought to be raised, or ought not to be lowered, a court of law could not

assist him. Once it would have compelled him to take what was offered, and work for it or go to prison. Now, in better times, it would offer him no protection against the most arbitrary conduct on the part of an employer. He was admonished that he must not attempt by any combination to 'fix the price of labour.' Yet he knew very well that in many trades the masters did by association among themselves fix the price of labour. He knew that there were associations of employers which held meetings at regular periods for the purpose of agreeing among themselves as to the wages they would pay to their workmen. He failed to see why he and his fellows should not come to a common resolution as to the wages they would accept. The argument drawn from the 'wages fund' did not affect him greatly. He reasoned the matter out in a rough and ready way of his own. He saw that the employer was making a great deal of money in the year, and that he and his fellows had very small wages. It seemed to him that the master ought to be content with a smaller amount of profit, and give his workmen a larger weekly rate of pay. That may not have been very sound political economy; but even as a thesis of political economy it was not to be got rid of by the familiar way of putting the argument about the wages fund. As regarded the right of combination, he saw that other men in other occupations did combine and did have rules of their own, and in fact trades-unions of their own. What, he asked, is the Bar but a trades-union? Is not a man

prohibited from competing with his fellows by taking a rate of pay lower than the minimum fixed by the association? Is he not refused permission to practise at all if he will not conform to the rules of the lawyers' union? What is the medical profession but a trades-union? What the Stock Exchange?

In spite of law, in spite of public opinion, the trades-unions went on and prospered. Some of them grew to be great organisations, disposing of vast funds. Several fought out against employers long battles that were almost like a social civil war. Sometimes they were defeated; sometimes they were victorious; sometimes they got at least so far that each side could claim the victory, and wrangle once more historically over the point. Many individual societies were badly managed and went to pieces. Some were made the victims of swindlers, just like other institutions among other classes. Some were brought into difficulties simply because of the childlike ignorance of the most elementary principles of political economy with which they were conducted. Still the Trades-union, taken as a whole, became stronger and stronger every day. It became part of the social life of the working-classes. At last it began to find public opinion giving way before it. Some eminent men, of whom Mr. Mill was the greatest, had long been endeavouring to get the world to recognise the fact that a strike is not a thing which can be called good or bad until we know its object and its history; that the men who strike may be sometimes right, and that they have sometimes been

successful. But as usual in this country, and as another evidence doubtless of what is commonly called the practical character of Englishmen, the right of the trades-unions to existence and to social recognition was chiefly impressed upon the public mind by the strength of the organisation itself. The processions of the trades-unions during the Reform agitation had startled many alarmists and set many indolent minds thinking. This vast organisation had apparently sprung out of the ground. Every influence, legal, social, and political, had been against it. The press had condemned it; the pulpit had denounced it; Parliament had passed no end of laws against it; good men mourned over it; wise men shook their heads at it; and yet there it was, stronger than ever. Many men came at once to the frankly admitted conclusion that there must be some principles, economic as well as others, to justify the existence and the growth of so remarkable an institution. The Sheffield outrages, even while they horrified everyone, yet made most persons begin to feel that the time had come when there must not be left in the mouth of the worst and most worthless member of a trades-union any excuse for saying any longer that the law was unjust to him and to his class. A course of legislation was then begun which was not made complete for several years after. We may, however, anticipate here the measures which passed in 1875, and show how at length the fair claims of the unions were recognised. The masters and workmen were placed on absolute equality as

regarded the matter of contract. They had been thus equal for many years in other countries; in France, Germany, and Italy, for example. A breach of contract resulting in damages was to be treated on either side as giving rise to a civil and not a criminal remedy. There was to be no imprisonment, except as it is ordered in other cases, by a county court judge; that is, a man may be committed to prison who has been ordered to pay a certain sum, and out of contumacy will not pay it, although payment is shown to be within his power. No combination of persons is to be deemed criminal if the act proposed to be done would not be criminal when done by one person. Several breaches of contract were, however, very properly made the subject of special legislation. If, for example, a man 'wilfully and maliciously' broke his contract of service to a gas or water company, knowing that by doing so he might cause great public injury, he might be imprisoned. This is perfectly reasonable. A man employed to watch a line of railway who wilfully broke his contract of service and ran away at a time when his sudden absence might cause the destruction of a coming train, would hardly be punished adequately by a civil process and an order to pay a fine. On the other hand, it should be said that the person hiring could be imprisoned for breach of contract as well as the person hired, if his breach of contract involved serious injury, or even serious danger, to life or property. Imprisonment too might be inflicted on any person who used either violence or

intimidation to compel others to act with him. It was made strictly unlawful and punishable by imprisonment to hide or injure the tools of workmen in order to prevent them from doing their work; or to 'beset' workmen in order to prevent them from getting to their place of business, or to intimidate them into keeping away from it. In principle this legislation accomplished all that any reasonable advocate of the claims of the trades-unions could have demanded. It put the masters and the workmen on an equality. It recognised the right of combination for every purpose which is not itself actually contrary to law. It settled the fact that the right of a combination is just the same as the right of an individual. The law had long conceded to any one man the right to say for himself that he would not work for less than a certain rate of wages. It now acknowledged that a hundred or ten thousand working-men have a right to combine in the same resolution. It admitted their legal right to put this resolve into execution by way of a strike if they so think fit. The law has nothing to do with the wisdom or the folly of the act. It may be very unwise; it may be ridiculous; that is a matter for the decision of the persons concerned in it. A man may be a great fool who goes to law for some unreasonable claim, or to resist some well-sustained demand; but the law-courts are open to him all the same—if he throws away his money, that is his affair. Then, to carry the exposition a little further, an association of working-men have a perfect legal right to endeavour to persuade other

working-men to adopt their views, accept their resolutions, and become members of their union. They have a right to say that anyone who does not agree to their rules shall not become or shall not remain a member of their society. Further, and finally, they have a right to say that they will not work in the same establishment with men who have acted in such a way as in their opinion to do injury to the common cause of the trade. This may seem to assert a very injurious principle; yet its justice is hardly to be disputed. Its justice never would have been disputed if the upper classes in this country, and all who follow their lead, had not got into the habit of regarding trade questions from the employers' point of view. No one would have questioned the right of an employer to dismiss a number of workmen because they belonged to a society of communists. Many persons would think him very harsh and unreasonable; but many also would hold that he was doing perfectly right; and no one would say that he was acting in excess of his strict rights as an employer. His argument would be: 'Communism is a principle directly opposed to the interests of property; I as a man of property cannot have men in my employ who are engaged in a purpose which I believe destructive to the interests of my class.' This is exactly what the trades-unions said of men who went in opposition to the union. They said: 'These men are acting in a manner highly injurious to the interests of our class; we will not work with them.' Their case is even better than that of the employer.

The employer says: 'I have a right to turn these men out of my place; they shall not work for me.' The union men only said: 'We will not work with men who set themselves in opposition to the interests of the union.' Everyone knows that there are eccentric employers here and there who make rules of various odd kinds with regard to the conditions on which they will accept the services of persons willing to work. One will not employ a Catholic; another will not employ a Unitarian; a third proscribes any young man who smokes. We have heard of a great establishment the proprietor of which would not employ, or continue to employ, any man who wore a moustache. The members of the trades-unions were of course fully aware of the existence of such arbitrary conditions imposed by employers. It naturally seemed intolerable to them to find that they were preached at in most of the newspapers, and condemned from all platforms except their own, because they asserted an independence of action for themselves in matters of far greater importance to the interests of their union and their class.

So far as this we believe their rights are now fully admitted. Beyond this no sensible man among the trades-unions themselves would think of asking that they should go. The unions have no right to coerce or intimidate anyone into agreement with them. To refuse to associate with a man is a very different thing from claiming a right to molest or frighten him. The more fully the rights of the trades-unions are acknowledged, the more energetic

and fearless the law may be in preventing them from going beyond those rights. We say fearless, because law, or those who administer it, can always and only be fearless when the authority exerted is based on fairness and sound principle. The men who worked most earnestly to organise and maintain the trades-unions never could have had any wish that the organisation should act in violation of the principles of justice, civilisation, and public policy. Perhaps if the just claims and the substantial rights of the unions had been recognised long before, the world might never have been shocked by the hideous revelations of crime and outrage in Sheffield and in Manchester. No influence is more demoralising to the character of men than to feel that the laws of a country deal unjustly with them; that the laws are made by and for a class whose sympathies are not with them; and that from the protection of those laws they are blindly or purposely excluded.

The civil laws which dealt so harshly for a long time with Trades-unionism dealt unfairly too with the friendly societies, with that strong and sudden growth of our modern days—Co-operation. We call it the growth of our modern days because, although there has been a principle of co-operation in some form or other working in a more or less experimental and darkened way all through the history of civilisation, yet the shape it has assumed of recent days is strictly a growth of modern conditions. If working-men can combine effectively and in large numbers for a benefit society or for a strike, why should they not

also co-operate for the purpose of supplying each other with good and cheap food and clothing, and dividing among themselves the profits which would otherwise be distributed among various manufacturers and shopkeepers? This is a question which had often been put before, without any very decided practical result coming of it; but in 1844, or thereabouts, it was put and tested in a highly practical manner by some working-men in the north of England. North and south of England seem to be marked out by the same differences as those which distinguish north and south in most other places: the north has more of the vigorous and practical intelligence, the south more of the poetic and artistic feeling. From the sturdy north of England have always come the great political and industrial movements which specially contributed to make England what we now know her to be. In the north the co-operative movement first sprang into existence. The association called 'The Equitable Pioneers' Co-operative Store' was founded in Rochdale by a few poor flannel-weavers. The times were bad; there had been a failure of a savings-bank, involving heavy loss to many classes; and these men cast about in their minds for some way of making their little earnings go far. Most of them were, or rather had been, followers of Robert Owen, who, if he taught men to think wrongly on many subjects, taught them at least to think. These Rochdale weavers were thoughtful men, probably of the class who might have figured in the pages of 'Alton Locke.' One decidedly good teaching which they

had from Robert Owen was a dislike to the credit system. They saw that the shopkeeper who gave his goods at long credit must necessarily have to charge a much higher price than the actual value of the goods, and even of a reasonable profit, in order to make up for his having to lie out of his money, and to secure himself against bad debts. They also saw that the credit system leads to almost incessant litigation; and besides that litigation means the waste of time and money, some of them, it appears, had a conscientious objection to the taking of an oath. It occurred to these Rochdale weavers, therefore, that if they could get together a little capital they might start a shop or store of their own, and thus be able to supply themselves with better goods, and at cheaper rates, than by dealing with the ordinary tradesmen. Twenty-eight of them began by subscribing twopence a week each. The number of subscribers was afterwards increased to forty, and the weekly subscription to threepence. When they had got 28*l.* they thought they had capital enough to begin their enterprise with. They took a small shop in a little back street, called Toad Lane. The name might seem a repulsive one, and perhaps ill-omened, unless indeed its omen were to be held encouraging, on the theory of the toad bearing the precious jewel in his head. But it has to be said that 'Toad Lane' was only the Lancashire corruption of 'The Old Lane'; 'The Old' soon changing itself into 'T' Owd,' in a manner familiar to all who know Lancashire, and 'T' Owd' be-

coming 'Toad' by easy and rapid transmutation. After the shop had been fitted up, the equitable pioneers had only 14*l.* left to stock it; and the concern looked so small and shabby that the hearts of some of the pioneers might have well-nigh sunk within them. A neighbouring shopkeeper, feeling utter contempt for the whole enterprise, declared that he could remove the whole stock-in-trade in a wheelbarrow. The wheelbarrow-load of goods soon, however, became too heavy to be carried away in the hold of a great steamer. The pioneers began by supplying each other with groceries; they went on to butchers' meat, and then to all sorts of clothing. From supplying goods they progressed on to the manufacturing of goods; they had a corn mill and a cotton mill, and they became to a certain extent a land and building society. They set aside parts of their profits for a library and reading-room, and they founded a co-operative Turkish bath. Their capital of 28*l.* swelled in sixteen years to over 120,000*l.* Cash payments and the division of profits were the main sources of this remarkable prosperity. Much of their success in the beginning was due to the fact that they supplied good articles, and that those who bought could always rely on carrying home real value for their money. But the magic of the principle of division of profits worked wonders for them. Not merely did the shareholders share in the profits, but all the buyers received an equitable percentage on the price of every article they bought. Each purchaser, on paying for what he had bought, received a

ticket which entitled him to that percentage at each division of profit, and thus many a poor man found at the quarterly division that he had several shillings, perhaps a pound, coming to him, which seemed at first to have dropped out of the clouds, so little direct claim did he appear to have on it. He had not paid more for his goods than he would have had to pay at the cheapest shop; he had got them of the best quality the price could buy; and at the end of each period he found that he had a sum of money standing to his credit, which he could either take away or leave to accumulate at the store. Many other institutions were soon following the example of the Rochdale pioneers. Long before their capital had swelled to the amount we have mentioned, the North of England was studded with co-operative associations of one kind or another. One of the very earliest founded was the Leeds Corn Mill. There were working men's associations as well as co-operative stores. In the working associations the workers are the capitalists. They receive the regular rate of wages, and they also receive a dividend on their profits. We need not enter into further detail as to the progress of these institutions. Many of them proved sad failures. Some started on chimerical principles; some were stupidly, some selfishly mismanaged. There came seasons of heavy strain on labour and trade, when the resources of many were taxed to their uttermost, and when some even of the best seemed for a moment likely to go under. The co-operative associations suffered in fact the trials

and vicissitudes that must be met by all institutions of men. But the one result is clear and palpable; they have as a whole been a most remarkable success. Of late years the principle has been taken up by classes who would have appeared at one time to have little in common with the poor flannel-weavers of Rochdale. The civil servants of the Crown first adopted the idea; and now in some of the most fashionable quarters of London the carriages of some of their most fashionable residents are seen at the crowded doors of the co-operative store. However the co-operative principle may develop, it may safely be predicted that posterity will not let it die. It has taken firm hold of our modern society. No one now any longer dreams, as some of its more enthusiastic founders once did, that it is destined to prove a regenerator of mankind; that it is to extinguish competition, and the selfishness which keeps competition up. It is in its present stage nothing but competition in a new form. The co-operative store competes with the ordinary tradesman, who winces very keenly at the competition, and calls for even the intervention of Parliament to save him from at least one class of the competitors. But even very sanguine reformers do not often now ask that their one idea shall supersede every other; and most of the promoters of the co-operative system are well satisfied that it takes so conspicuous a place among established institutions. It seems certainly destined to develop rather than fade; to absorb rather than be absorbed. The law was much against the principle in the beginning.

Before 1852 all co-operative associations had to come under the Friendly Societies Act, which prohibited their dealing with any but their own members. An Act obtained in 1852 allowed them to sell to persons not members of their body. For many years they were not permitted to hold more than an acre of land. More lately this absurd restriction was abolished, and they were allowed to trade in land, to hold land to any extent, and to act as building societies. The friendly societies, which were in their origin merely working men's clubs, have been the subject of legislation since the later years of the last century. It may be doubted whether, even up to this day, that legislation has not done them more harm than good. The law neither takes them fairly under its protection and control, nor leaves them to do the best they can for themselves uncontrolled and on their own responsibility. At one time the sort of left-handed recognition which the law gave them had a direct tendency to do harm. An officer was appointed by the Government, who might inspect the manner in which the accounts of the societies were kept, and certify that they were in conformity with the law; but he had no authority to look actually into the affairs of a society. His business was in fact nothing more than to certify that the legal conditions had been fully complied with, thus implying that on the face of things the accounts seemed all right. The mere fact, however, that there was any manner of Government certificate proved sadly misleading to thousands of persons. Some actually

regarded the certificate as a guarantee given by the Government that their money was safe; a guarantee which bound the State to make good any loss to the depositors. Others, who were not quite so credulous, were convinced at least that the certificate testified on Government authority that the funds of the society were safe, and that its accounts and its business were managed on principles of strict economical soundness. The Government official certified nothing of the kind. A man at the head of a large establishment brings to some accountant the books of his household expenses. The accountant examines them and says, 'All these figures add up quite correctly; the accounts seem to be kept on the proper principle. If all these goods were got which I see put down here, and if all these payments were made, then your accounts are in safe condition.' But the accountant does not know whether the cook and the butler and the grooms got all the articles put down in the books, or whether the articles were all required, or whether they were paid for as stated. For all the accountant knows or professes to know, the owner of the house may be swindled by every servant and every tradesman. His affairs may be managed for him on some such principle as that of the house in which Gil Blas was once a servant, and where, from the steward down, the whole body of domestics and of tradespeople were in a conspiracy to cheat the unhappy proprietor. The certificate given to the friendly societies was of no greater value than this. Many of the societies were sadly mismanaged; in certain of

them there was the grossest malversation of funds; in some towns much distress was caused among the depositors in consequence. The societies had to pass, in fact, through a stage of confusion, ignorance, and experiment, and it is perhaps only to be wondered at that there was not greater mismanagement, greater blundering, and more lamentable failure. It is not by any means certain that during these earlier stages of the growth of such institutions, the interference and even the protection of Government would have done them much good. But the indirect control which the Government for a long time undertook, had apparently no other effect than to interpose restriction just where restriction was injurious, and to give a semblance of protection which was only calculated to create a false security in the minds of ignorant people and to lead to delusion and disappointment.

The Government cannot be charged of late years with any want of active interest in the business of life among the poor. Its protecting, directing hand is almost everywhere. Sometimes the help thus given is judicious and valuable. For example, the Post Office Savings Banks have become most popular institutions, and no one can doubt that they have tended to develop habits of prudence and economy among the poorer classes all over the country. One of the most curious phenomena of these later times is the reaction that has apparently taken place towards that system of paternal government which Macaulay detested, and which not long ago the Manchester School seemed in good hopes of being able to supersede by the virtue

of individual action, private enterprise, voluntary benevolence. We shall still have to describe some much more remarkable illustrations of this reaction than any that have yet been given. Keeping for the present to trades' organisations, we would direct attention to the fact that whereas in old days the Government said, 'You shall do nothing to help yourselves without our control; and we will do nothing for you but to prosecute you as often as possible,' the tendency now is to say, 'You may do everything you like for yourselves, but you must allow us to enter into a benevolent rivalry with you and insist upon doing all we can for you in our way at the same time.' Whatever the defects or the possible dangers of such a principle, if pushed too far, it is at least not likely to engender artizan conspiracy, to give excuse for secret association, to help men like Broadhead into the position of leaders and despots, to furnish weak minds with an excuse for following the instigations of the fire-raiser and the assassin. All that law has done lately to remove restriction from the 'organisation of labour,' if we may once more employ that pompous but expressive phrase, has been well done. We must not hasten to anticipate ill from the almost equally rapid movement of the tendency to help labour in doing labour's own proper work.

CHAPTER LV.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE NEW DOMINION.

On February 19, 1867, Lord Carnarvon, Secretary for the Colonies, moved the second reading of the Bill for the Confederation of the North American Provinces of the British Empire. This was in fact a measure to carry out in practical form the great principles which Lord Durham had laid down in his celebrated report. Lord Durham had done more than merely affirm the principles on which the Constitution of the Canadas should be established. He had laid the foundations of the structure. Now the time had come to raise the building to its practical completion. The bill prepared by Lord Carnarvon proposed that the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, in other words Upper and Lower Canada, along with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, should be joined in one federation, to be called the Dominion of Canada, having a central or federal Parliament, and local or state Legislatures. The central Parliament was to consist of a Senate and a House of Commons. The Senate was to be made up of seventy members nominated by the Governor-General for life, on a summons from under the Great Seal of Canada. The House of Commons was to be filled by members

elected by the people of the provinces according to population, at the rate of one member for every 17,000 persons, and the duration of a Parliament was not to be more than five years. The executive was vested in the Crown, represented of course by the Governor-General. The principle on which the central Parliament was constructed appears to have been arrived at by adopting some of the ideas of England and some of those of the United States. The Senate, for example, was made to resemble as nearly as possible the system of the English House of Lords; but the representative plan applied to the House of Commons was precisely the same as that adopted in the United States. It seems almost superfluous to observe that the whole idea on which the Dominion system rests is that of the American federation. The central Parliament manages the common affairs; each province has its own local laws and legislature. There is the greatest possible variety and diversity in the local systems of the different provinces of the Dominion. The members are elected to the House of Commons on the most diverse principles of suffrage. In some of the provinces the vote is open; in others it is given by ballot, in secret.

The Act of Confederation recites that the Constitution of the Dominion shall be similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom. But in truth the only similarity consists in the fact that one of the two chambers is nominated by the Crown, and that the authority of the Crown is represented in the Dominion by the presence of a Governor-General.

In all other respects the example of the American Republic has been followed. The keystone of the whole system is that principle of federation which the United States have so long represented, and which consists of local self-government for each member of the Confederacy and the authority of a common Parliament for strictly national affairs. This fact is not an objection to the scheme. It is, on the contrary, the best security for its success. It would have been impossible to establish in Canada anything really resembling the Constitution of England. Uniformity of legislation would have been unendurable. Nothing could make the Senate of Canada an institution like the English House of Lords. Nomination by the Crown could not do it. There was some wisdom in the objection raised by Mr. Bright to this part of the scheme. A good deal of sentimentalism was talked in Parliament by the Ministers in charge of the Confederation scheme about the filial affection of Canada for the mother country, and the intense anxiety of the Canadians to make their Constitution as like as possible to that of England. The Canadians appear to have very properly thought of their own interests first of all, and they adopted the system which they believed would best suit the conditions under which they lived. In doing so they did much to strengthen and to commend that federative principle on which their Dominion is founded, and which appears likely enough to contain the ultimate solution of the whole problem of government as applied

to a system made up of various populations with diverse nationalities, religions, and habitudes. So far as one may judge of the tendencies of modern times, it would seem that the inclination is to the formation of great State systems. The days of small independent States seem to be over. If this be so, it may safely be asserted that great State systems cannot be held together by uniform principles of legislation. The choice would clearly seem to be between small independent States and the principle of federation adopted in the formation of the Dominion of Canada.

The Dominion scheme only provided at first for the Confederation of the two Canadian provinces with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Provision was made, however, for the admission of any other province of British North America which should desire to follow suit. The newly constructed province of Manitoba, made up out of what had been the Hudson's Bay territories, was the first to come in. It was admitted into the union in 1870. British Columbia and Vancouver's Island followed in 1871, and Prince Edward's Island claimed admission in 1873. The Dominion now embraces the whole of the regions constituting British North America, with the exception of Newfoundland, which still prefers its lonely system of quasi-independence. It may be assumed, however, that this curious isolation will not last long; and the Act constituting the Dominion opens the door for the entrance of this latest lin-

gerer outside whenever she may think fit to claim admission.

The idea of a federation of the provinces of British North America was not new in 1867, or even in the days of Lord Durham. When the delegates of the revolted American colonies were discussing among themselves their terms of federation, they agreed in their articles of union, that Canada 'acceding to the Confederation and joining in the measures of the United States, shall be admitted into and entitled to the advantages of the union.' No answer to this appeal was made by either of the Canadas, but the idea of union among the British provinces among themselves evidently took root then. As early as 1810 a colonist put forward a somewhat elaborate scheme for the union of the provinces. In 1814 Chief Justice Sewell, of Quebec, submitted a plan of union to the Duke of Kent. In 1827 resolutions were introduced into the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada, having relation principally to a combination of the two Canadas, but also suggesting something 'more politic, wise, and generally advantageous; viz., an union of the whole four provinces of North America under a viceroyalty, with a facsimile of that great and glorious fabric, the best monument of human wisdom, the British Constitution.' Nothing further, however, was done to advance the principle of federation until after the rebellion in Canada, and the brief dictatorship of Lord Durham. Then, as we have already said, the foundation of the system was laid. In 1849 an association, called the North

American League, was formed, which held a meeting in Toronto to promote Confederation. In 1854 the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia discussed and adopted resolutions recommending the closer connection of the British provinces; and in 1857 the same province urged the question upon the consideration of Mr. Labouchere, afterwards Lord Taunton, and then Colonial Secretary. Mr. Labouchere seems to have thought that the Imperial Government had better not meddle or make in the matter, but leave it altogether for the spontaneous action of the colonists. In the following year the coalition Ministry of Canada, during the Governor-Generalship of Sir Francis Head, made a move by entering into communications with the Imperial Government and with the other American provinces. The other provinces hung back however, and nothing came of this effort. Then Nova Scotia tried to get up a scheme of union between herself, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward's Island. Canada offered to enter into the scheme; and in 1864 Mr. Cardwell, then Colonial Secretary, gave it his approval. New conferences were held in Quebec; but the plan was not successful. New Brunswick seems to have held back this time. It was clear, however, that the provinces were steadily moving toward an agreement, and that a basis of federation would be found before long. The maritime provinces always felt some difficulty in seeing their way to union with the Canadas. Their outlying position and their distance from the proposed seat of central government made one obvious reason

for hesitation. Even at the time when the bill for the Confederation was introduced into the House of Lords, Nova Scotia was still holding back. That difficulty, however, was got over, and the Act was passed in March 1867. Lord Monck was made the first Governor-General of the new Dominion, and its first Parliament met at Ottawa in November of the same year.

In 1869—we are now somewhat anticipating—the Dominion was enlarged by the acquisition of the famous Hudson's Bay territory. When the Charter of the Hudson's Bay Company expired in 1869, Lord Granville, then Colonial Secretary, proposed that the chief part of the Company's territories should be transferred to the Dominion for 300,000*l.*; and the proposition was agreed to on both sides. The Hudson's Bay Charter dated from the reign of Charles II. The region to which it referred carries some of its history imprinted in its names. Prince Rupert was at the head of the association incorporated by the Charter into the Hudson's Bay Company. The name of Rupert's Land perpetuates his memory as that of Prince Edward's Island will remind posterity of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, father of Queen Victoria. The Hudson's Bay Company obtained from King Charles, by virtue of the Charter in 1670, the sole and absolute government of the vast watershed of Hudson's Bay, the Rupert's Land of the Charter, on condition of paying yearly to the King and his successors 'two elks and two black beavers,' 'whensoever and as often as we, our heirs and successors,

shall happen to enter into the said countries, territories, and regions.' The Hudson's Bay Company was opposed by the North West Fur Company in 1783, which fought them for a long time with Indians and law, with the tomahawk of the red man and the legal judgment of a Romilly or a Keating. In 1812 Lord Selkirk founded the Red River Company. This interloper on the battlefield was harassed by the North West Company, and it was not until 1821, when the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies—impoverished by their long warfare—amalgamated their interests, that the Red River settlers were able to reap their harvests in peace, disturbed only by occasional plagues of locusts and blackbirds. In 1835, on Lord Selkirk's death, the Hudson's Bay Company bought the settlement from his executors. It had been under their sway before that, having been committed to their care by Lord Selkirk during his lifetime. The privilege of exclusive trading east of the Rocky Mountains was conferred by Royal license for twenty-one years in May 1838, and some ten years later the Company received a grant of Vancouver's Island for the term of ten years from 1849 to 1859. The Hudson's Bay Company were always careful to foster the idea that their territory was chiefly wilderness, and discountenanced the reports of its fertility and fitness for colonisation which were from time to time brought to the ears of the English Government. In 1857, at the instance of Mr. Labouchere, a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to enquire into the state of the

British possessions under the Company's administration. Various Government expeditions, and the publication of many Blue Books enlightened the public mind as to the real nature of those tracts of land which the council from the Fenchurch Street house declared to be so desolate. A curious illustration of the policy adopted by the Hudson's Bay Company is to be found in the contrast between the glowing descriptions of the lands under their sway given by Sir George Simpson, who was for forty years Governor of the Hudson's Bay territories, in his 'Overland Journey Round the World,' and his evidence given before the Select Committee of the House of Commons. The Company exerted itself strenuously to defend its interests. The influence of Mr. Edward Ellice, who was at once a director of the Company, a member of the Committee, and a witness, did much to guide the Committee's decision. An amendment of Mr. Gladstone to their unsatisfactory report, urging that all lands capable of colonisation be withdrawn from the Company, and only land incapable of being so treated left to them, was negatived by the casting vote of the chairman. During the sittings of the Committee there was cited in evidence a petition from 575 Red River settlers to the Legislative Assembly of Canada demanding British protection. This appeal was a proceeding curiously at variance with the later action of the settlement. When in 1869 the chief part of the territories was transferred to Canada, on the proposition of Earl Granville, the Red River country rose in rebellion, and refused to receive the new

Governor. Louis Riel, the insurgent chief, seized on Fort Garry and the Company's treasury, and proclaimed the independence of the settlement. Sir Garnet, then Colonel, Wolseley, was sent in command of an expedition which reached Fort Garry on August 23, when the insurgents submitted without resistance, and the district received the name of Manitoba.

Thus the Dominion of Canada now stretches from ocean to ocean. The population of British North America did not exceed one million and a half in 1841, at the time of the granting of the Constitution, and it is now over four millions. The revenue of the provinces has multiplied more than twentyfold during the same time. Canada has everything that ought to make a commonwealth great and prosperous. The fisheries of her maritime provinces, the coal and iron of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, the grain-producing regions of the North-West, the superb St. Lawrence, hardly rivalled on the globe as a channel of commerce from the interior of a country to the ocean—all these are guarantees of a great future. Not unnaturally many in and out of Canada speculate as to the form that future will show. Canada sprang into prosperity when she was allowed to do the work of her political development for herself; the question is will she never demand a more absolute self-government? Will she be captivated by the charms of a distinct national existence? For some years a feeling was spreading in England which began to find expression in repeated and very distinct suggestions that the Canadians had better begin to think

of looking out for themselves. Many Englishmen complained of this country being expected to undertake the principal cost of the defences of Canada, and to guarantee her railway schemes, especially when the commercial policy which Canada adopted towards England was one of a strictly protective character. Shall we have to fight the battles of Canada, it was asked; shall we have to become responsible for her railway enterprises; and is Canada not even to give us an open market for our manufactures? On the other hand, some Canadians might well have asked whether Canada was to be always left open as a possible battle-ground on which England's quarrels were to be fought out. If the *Alabama* dispute had led to war, the United States would have invaded Canada. The colonists, who had had nothing to do with the cause of quarrel, would have seen their homesteads exposed to all the dangers and the terrors of invasion. It was natural that such considerations should have their influence on both sides. But, as often happens in our political life, the advocates of the policy which would urge the colonists into independence went just so far as to bring about a reaction. Then for a while nothing was heard here but the protestations of statesmen that the connection with the Canadas and with all the colonies was the one thing for which they lived. This outcry bore down all others for a time, and the hints as to independence were heard no more. The movement that way had evidently been premature. Indeed, it not only came prematurely, but it came from the wrong

side. It ought not to be part of the policy of the mother country to prompt and goad the colonies into independence. If the demand is ever made it ought to be the spontaneous suggestion of the colonies themselves. The question will be settled by the interests of Canada itself when the time for decision comes. Mere protestations of kinship and loyalty and so forth will not count for much in the final settlement. A Canadian official, Mr. J. G. Bourinot, of Ottawa, has argued with much force that there are three destinies open to Canada, one of which she will have some time or other to choose. These are, annexation to the United States, complete independence, and what he calls 'consolidation into the empire.' For the present at least there cannot be said to be anywhere in Canada a party in favour of annexation to the United States. Such a change is undoubtedly one of the possibilities; and we agree with Mr. Bourinot in thinking it more probable than that the connection with England should always endure on its present conditions. But the question of annexation, which once was a practical and positive reality in Canadian politics, has been losing its vitality steadily ever since the mission of Lord Durham; and just now can hardly be called a living question at all. Independence is sure to become some time or other a demand among Canadians. It is hardly possible to believe that the Dominion should long go on without seeing the rise of a political party whose watchword will be a cry for complete national independence. The Dominion has already a practical

independence. Except for the fact that she receives the Governor-General whom the Sovereign sends out, Canada is as completely mistress of her own destinies as though she were an independent republic. She frames her own tariffs to suit her own interests, and she may even, if she pleases, as Mr. Bourinot says, fix the expenses of her militia and her defences solely with regard to Canadian inclinations. Every year, every event, only makes it more clear that she is virtually independent.

The Letellier controversy, to go forward a few years, is an illustration of this fact. In March 1878, M. Luc Letellier, the Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec, quarrelled with his Cabinet, and dismissed the Premier, M. C. B. de Boucherville, and his ministry, alleging, as justification for his act, that the Government was in the habit of passing various measures without his knowledge, and of generally neglecting to consult with him. He then placed M. Joly in office, though M. Joly's ministry were unable to command a majority in the House. A petition was thereupon addressed to the Governor in Council, praying for M. Letellier's dismissal. Lord Lorne's ministers advised him to accede to the petition. Lord Lorne objected, on the ground that though a Governor-General appointed a Lieutenant-Governor on the advice of his ministers, the removal of the Lieutenant-Governor was a matter for his own personal decision. This point of view seemed to be authorised by the words of the Dominion Act; but an appeal from Lord Lorne to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the

Colonial Secretary, received a reply counselling the Governor-General to give way to his ministers. Thus the Imperial Government withdrew from the representative of the Crown all but the merest semblance of authority, and made him—what indeed he should be, but certainly was not intended to be at the time when the confederation was formed—the figure-head of the Dominion, the mouth-piece for the utterances of the Canadian legislature. Acting upon the advice of the Colonial Secretary, Lord Lorne gave way, M. Luc Letellier was removed, and with him went the last pretension of England to rule her North American colonies.

Still, there is a vast difference between the charm of a complete and that of a merely virtual independence. The time might come when Canada would feel ambitious of a career and a history all her own. In a merely practical point of view she might object to the dangerous fellowship of a country which is liable to be engaged in wars with states whose fleets might harass Canadian seaports; or whose armies, in at least one case, might cross the Canadian frontier line. The very reasonable policy which might induce England some time to say that the Canadians must defend themselves, might well seem to the Canadians to be appropriately followed up by a declaration on the part of the Dominion, that if she must defend herself, she must be free from responsibility for the foreign policy of England. Independence, therefore, is a possibility of the future, although it has not yet come to be a question in practical politics. But then

there is the third possibility to which Mr. Bourinot refers—that of 'consolidation into the empire.' Canada might become one member of a great English federation, and in that way have a voice in directing the foreign policy of England, while admitting English opinion to a voice in the construction of Canadian tariffs. This question concerns the destinies of most other colonies of Great Britain; of all her colonies in time. What is to come of Australia? That colony has no United States near at hand to suggest a possibility of annexation; and her choice is apparently limited to the alternative of independence or 'consolidation into the empire.' Independence is surely in this case a natural and a possible solution. Australia is well suited by her geographical position and the circumstances of her political growth to form, if it were necessary, a confederation of her own. Australia now consists of five separate colonies—New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia, and Queensland; all these are provinces of one vast island, the largest island in the world. We leave New Zealand and even Tasmania out of consideration for the moment. Tasmania, and even New Zealand, might naturally enough form part of an Australian confederation, and should of necessity form part of such a confederation were it Australasian. For the present, however, we prefer to speak of the colonies which are bound together within the shore-lines of the one great island. All these colonies have now representative government, with responsible ministries, and parliamentary cham-

bers. New South Wales is the oldest of the group. Its political life may be said to date from 1853, when it first received what is fairly to be called a constitution. For ten years previously it had possessed a sort of legislature, consisting of a single Chamber, of which half the members were nominee, and the other half elected. One of the most distinguished members of that Chamber for many years was Mr. Lowe, who appears to have learned to hate democratic government from watching over its earliest infancy, as some women imbibe a dislike to all children from having had to do too much nursery-work in their girlhood. Victoria, which was separated from New South Wales in 1851, got her liberal constitution in 1856. The other colonies followed by degrees. The constitutional systems differ among themselves as to certain of their details. The electoral qualification, for example, differs considerably. Generally speaking, however, they may be set down as all alike illustrating the principles and exercising the influence of representative government. They are training schools for the work of complete independence, if ever it should suit the interests of the Colonies to start absolutely for themselves. They have not got on so far without much confusion and many sad mistakes. The constitutional controversies and difficulties in Victoria and in other Australian colonies are a favourite example with some writers and speakers, to show the failure of the democratic principle in government. But it is always forgotten that the principle of representative government in a colony like Victoria is, as a matter

of necessity, that of democracy. Even those who believe the aristocratic influence invaluable in the life of a nation must see that New South Wales and Victoria and Queensland must somehow contrive to do without such an influence. An aristocracy cannot be imported; nor can it be sown in the evening to grow up next morning. The colonists are compelled to construct a system without it. There are many difficulties in their way. It is often carelessly said that they ought to find the work easy enough, because they have the example and the experience of England to guide them. But they have no such guide. The conditions under which the colonies have to create a constitutional system are entirely different from those of England; so different, indeed, that there must be a certain danger of going astray simply from trying to follow England's example under circumstances entirely unlike those of England.

Despite all confusion or blundering, however, it is clear that the Australian colonies are growing and prospering, and that their gradual training in the business of political government will soon bring each of them to the principles and the mechanism best suited for its condition and its development. All the lessons lately taught by the Home Government have been, and very properly, that they must manage their affairs and compose their domestic quarrels without the intervention of Imperial authority. This has been impressed upon them just as earnestly by Conservative as by Liberal Secretaries of State. The Victorian deadlock, as it was called, is a recent

example. It began with a dispute between the two Chambers as to the payment of members. The majority in the Legislative Assembly, or House of Commons, passed as usual the estimate for the payment of members, the system of paying the members having prevailed since 1872. It was thrown out by the Legislative Council, or Senate. The Chief Secretary—or, as we should call him, the Prime Minister—of the colony, Mr. Graham Berry, added the amount to the Appropriation Bill. The Legislative Council refused to pass the Bill. The ministry retorted by dismissing or threatening to dismiss a whole army of Government officials—county court judges, magistrates, coroners, and other functionaries—on the ground that they had not the money to pay their salaries. Constitutional government seemed for the moment to have really come to a deadlock. Both Chambers eagerly appealed to the Governor. The Governor, acting on the advice of the Colonial Office, preserved a strict neutrality. The money question was temporarily settled by a sort of compromise; but the popular Assembly at once set to work, with the assistance of the Colonial Ministry, to diminish the power of the Upper Chamber. They adopted a measure for that purpose; but the question was how to get the Upper Chamber to pass it. Mr. Berry came to England to endeavour to prevail upon the Government here to effect a change in the Victorian constitution by an Imperial decree. The Conservative Secretary of State, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, firmly refused to interfere. Only in the very last

extremity, it was authoritatively declared, could the mother country interfere in the domestic disputes of a colony having parliamentary institutions and a responsible ministry. This was an important declaration, and it announced a just and wise resolve. The training given by self-government would be of little value or substance indeed if the mother country were to undertake to intervene whenever anything went wrong, and on her own authority try to set it right. The Australian colonies have therefore, like the dominion of Canada, a virtual independence. They have the right of complete self-government. Only the name of a distinct nationality is wanting. As in the case of the dominion of Canada, so too in that of Australia, it is quite possible that the colonists may some time feel inspired by the longing for a national independence. In such a condition of things the geographical situation of Australia would make the experiment seem even more natural than that of Canada. Australia, girt by her oceans, and with the Tasmanian and New Zealand islands for associates, would form a natural federation apart: a federation quite capable of living for itself, and of having in the future a distinct nationality, and perhaps a great history.

But Australia, or Australasia, would also be well fitted to take her part in that wider and grander federation which is already the dream and the faith of many colonists and some Englishmen. This is the third choice which Mr. Bourinot contemplates as offered to the colonies and to England. Why, it is

asked, should there not be a great Confederation of England, of Ireland, and of the states that are now colonies? Why should there not be an Imperial Parliament, then truly Imperial, in which each of these separate provinces or states should be represented for common purposes, while each had separately its local legislature to arrange its own domestic affairs? Why should Canada, should Victoria, should Cape Colony, or Natal, or New Zealand, be left absolutely without a voice in the decision of those important questions of foreign policy, of peace and war, which may have such momentous results for any one of those provinces? A war with the United States would undoubtedly bring on an invasion of Canada. The Crimean war seemed at one time destined to invite a Russian raid upon some of the Australian colonies. Why should colonies like these be allowed no share in deciding the policy which may possibly come to its most momentous issue on their own soil? If the colonies are never to have that voice in Imperial affairs, is it likely that they will long continue merely to hang on to the skirts of England? Then, again, one great difficulty between England and her colonies is caused by the different views which they take on questions of tariff and taxation. Canada, for example, enforces against Great Britain the severest protective system. English politicians and manufacturers chafe so much at this that it seems likely to be the cause at one time or other of a quarrel which no fine phrases on either side can conjure away. An English states-

man of the present day has said that as we lost some of our American colonies because we insisted upon taxing them, we may lose the others because we will not permit them to tax us. Might not this difficulty, too, be removed from the path of the future if colonists and inhabitants of the mother country alike sat in the one Imperial legislature, and discussed in common their great common interests? Is not some such principle, indeed, the probable solution of the problem of government for systems made up of various and widely separated provinces and nationalities? Here, too, would be a framework always wide enough for the reception of new creations. The process which in the American Republic converts first a desert into a territory, and then a territory into a state, would admit new province after new province into this great federated system. Who shall say that even the future relations of the peoples of Hindostan might not be satisfactorily provided for by such a principle of federation? Immense, no doubt, are the difficulties that lie in the way of such a scheme. To many minds it will seem that only the merest dreamers could entertain the idea. But the so-called dreamers would, perhaps, have something to say for the practicable nature of their plan. They might at least retort upon their critics by asking, 'What then have you, who call yourselves practical men and despise the dreamers of dreams—what have you to suggest? Do you really believe that things can always go on as they are going now? You have eyes; open them and look

beyond your own parish, your own club, coterie, or village, and say whether you think it possible that great colonies like those of British North America and those of Australasia are likely to remain always content with their present anomalous condition, or that your own people would remain for ever content with it even if the colonists were never to complain? What then do you expect? Annexation to America in the one case; independence in the other, or perhaps independence in both, and in all? To that result, if it must come to that, the mind of England would have to reconcile herself. She has no Imperial privilege to interfere with the destinies of the world. But in the meantime would it not be the part of you, the practical men, to consider whether that other suggestion is not more desirable as well as more easy to realise; that scheme of a great federation which should reconcile the several interests and the individual energies of the colonies with the central policy of a great free empire?'

CHAPTER LVI.

'BEGINS WITH SOLDAN, ENDS WITH PRESTER JOHN.'

In the summer of 1867 England received with strange welcome a strange visitor. 'Quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes?' Looking forward into the future we may indeed apply yet other words of Dido, and say of the new comer to these shores, 'Quibus ille jactatus fatis!' It was the Sultan of Turkey who came to visit England—the Sultan Abdul-Aziz, whose career was to end ten years after in dethronement and suicide. Abdul-Aziz was the first Sultan who ever set his foot on English soil. He was welcomed with a show of enthusiasm which made cool observers wonder and shrug their shoulders. The Cretan insurrection was going on, and the Sultan's generals were doing cruel work among the unfortunate rebels of that Greek race with which the people of England had so long and so loudly professed the deepest sympathy. Yet the Sultan was received by Englishmen with what must have seemed to him a genuine outburst of national enthusiasm. As a matter of course he received the usual Court entertainments; but he was also entertained gorgeously by the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London; he went in state to the Opera and the Crystal Palace; he saw a review

of the fleet, in company with the Queen, at Spithead; he was run after and shouted for by vast crowds wherever he showed his dark and melancholy face, on which even then the sullen shadow of the future might seem to have been cast. His presence threw completely into the background that of his nominal vassal the Viceroy of Egypt, who might otherwise have been a very sufficient lion in himself. Abdul-Aziz doubtless believed in the genuineness of the reception, and thought it denoted a real and a lasting sympathy with him and his State. He did not know how easily crowds are gathered and the fire of popular enthusiasm is lighted in London. The Shah of Persia was to experience the same sort of reception not long after; Garibaldi had enjoyed it not long before; Kossuth had had it in his time. Some of the newspapers politely professed to believe that the visit would be productive of wonderful results to Turkey. The Sultan, it was suggested, would surely return to Constantinople with his head full of new ideas gathered up in the West. He would go back much impressed by the evidences of the blessings of our constitutional government, and the progressive nature of our civic institutions. He would read a lesson in the glass and iron of the Crystal Palace, the solid splendours of the Guildhall. He would learn something from the directors of the railway companies, and something from the Lord Mayor. The Cattle Show at the Agricultural Hall could not be lost on his observant eyes. The result would be a new era for Turkey—another new era: the real new era this

time. The poor Sultan's head must have been sadly bemused by all the various sights he was forced to see. He left England just before the public had had time to get tired of him; and the new era did not appear to be any nearer for Turkey after his return home.

Mr. Disraeli astonished and amused the public towards the close of 1867 by a declaration he made at a dinner which was given in his honour at Edinburgh. The company were surprised to learn that he had for many years been a thorough reformer and an advocate of popular suffrage, and that he had only kept his convictions to himself because it was necessary to instil them gently into the minds of his political colleagues. 'I had,' he said, 'to prepare the mind of the country, and to educate—if it be not arrogant to use such a phrase—to educate our party. It is a large party, and requires its attention to be called to questions of this kind with some pressure. I had to prepare the mind of Parliament and the country on this question of Reform.' All the time, therefore, that Mr. Disraeli was fighting against Reform Bills, he was really trying to lead his party 'with a gentle hand, thither, oh, thither,' towards the principles of popular reform. This then, people said, is what Vivian Grey meant when he declared that for statesmen who would rule, 'our wisdom must be concealed under folly, and our constancy under caprice.' Some members of the party which Mr. Disraeli professed to have thus cleverly educated, were a little scandalised and even shocked at the frank

composure of his confession ; some were offended ; it seemed to them that their ingenious instructor had made fools of them. But the general public, as usual, persisted in refusing to take Mr. Disraeli seriously, or to fasten on him any moral responsibility for anything he might say or do. It might have been wrong in another statesman to put on for years the profession of Conservatism in order that he might get more deeply into the confidence of Conservatives and instil into them the principles of Mr. Bright. But in Mr. Disraeli it was of no consequence ; that was his way; if he were anything but that he would not be Mr. Disraeli ; he would not be leader of the House of Commons ; he would not be Prime Minister of England.

For to that it soon came ; came at last. 'At this moment how many a powerful noble wants only wit to be a minister ; and what wants Vivian Grey to attain the same end?' What Vivian Grey once wanted to attain that end he had long since compassed. Only the opportunity was lately needed to make him Prime Minister ; and that opportunity came early in 1868. Lord Derby's health had for some time been so weakly that he was anxious to get rid of the trouble of office as soon as possible. In February 1868 he became so ill that his condition excited the gravest anxiety. He rallied indeed and grew much better ; but he took the warning and determined on retiring from office. He tendered his resignation, and it was accepted by the Queen. It fell to the lot of his son, Lord Stanley, to make the

announcement in the House of Commons. There was a general regret felt for the retirement of Lord Derby from a leading place in politics; but as soon as it appeared that his physical condition was not actually hopeless, men's minds turned at once from him to his successor. No one could now doubt that Mr. Disraeli's time had come. The patient career, the thirty years' war against difficulties, were to have the long-desired reward. The Queen sent for Mr. Disraeli, and invited him to assume Lord Derby's vacated place and to form a Government. By a curious coincidence the autograph letter containing this invitation was brought from Osborne to the new Prime Minister by General Grey, the man who defeated Mr. Disraeli in his first endeavour to enter the House of Commons. That was the contest for Wycombe in June 1832. It was a memorable contest in many ways. It was the last election under the political conditions which the Reform Bill brought to a close. The Reform Bill had only just been passed when the Wycombe election took place, and had not come into actual operation. The state of the poll is amusing to read of now. Thirty-five voters all told registered their suffrages. Twenty-three voted for Colonel Grey, as he then was; twelve were induced to support Mr. Disraeli. Then Mr. Disraeli retired from the contest, and Colonel Grey was proclaimed the representative of Wycombe by a majority of eleven. Nor had Wycombe exhausted in the contest all its electoral strength. There were, it seemed, two voters more in

the borough who would have polled, if it were necessary, on the side of Colonel Grey. Mr. Disraeli's successful rival in that first struggle for a seat in Parliament was now the bearer of the Queen's invitation to Mr. Disraeli to become Prime Minister of England. The public in general were well pleased that Mr. Disraeli should reach the object of his ambition. It seemed only the fit return for his long and hard struggle against so many adverse conditions. He had battled with his evil stars; and his triumph over them pleased most of those who had observed the contest. Mr. Frank H. Hill, in that remarkable book, unrivalled in its way, which bears the modest name of 'Political Portraits,' speaks of Mr. Disraeli's curiously isolated position in the House of Commons. 'He sits like a solitary gladiator waiting the signal for combat.' The sentence is admirable as a description. Nothing could be happier as a comparison. For the very reason that Mr. Disraeli had always been like the solitary gladiator the public were all the more pleased when his long, lonely struggle 'for his own hand' carried off the prize at last. The public never looked on Mr. Disraeli, up to this period of his career at least, as anything but a brilliant gladiator. The author of 'Political Portraits' observes, that 'Mr. Disraeli's Premiership is remarkable chiefly for the fact that he was Prime Minister.' This too was true. It is a correct description of that short season of rule which came to Mr. Disraeli on the retirement of Lord Derby. But if Mr. Hill were to take up the subject now, he would probably admit that Mr. Disraeli's

second Premiership was remarkable for a good many other things besides the fact that he was a second time Prime Minister.

The new Premier made few changes in his Cabinet. His former lieutenant, Lord Cairns, had been for some time one of the Lords Justices of the Court of Chancery. Mr. Disraeli made him Lord Chancellor. In order to do this he had to undertake the somewhat ungracious task of informing Lord Chelmsford, who sat on the woolsack during Lord Derby's tenure of office, that his services would no longer be required. Lord Chelmsford's friends were very angry, and a painful controversy began in the newspapers. It was plainly stated by some of the aggrieved that Lord Chelmsford had been put aside because he had shown himself too firmly independent in his selection of judges. But there seems no reason to ascribe Mr. Disraeli's action to any other than its obvious and reasonable motive. His Ministry was singularly weak in debating talent in the House of Lords. Lord Cairns was one of the best Parliamentary debaters of the day ; Lord Chelmsford was hardly entitled to be called a Parliamentary debater at all. Lord Cairns was a really great lawyer; Lord Chelmsford was only a lawyer of respectable capacity. Lord Chelmsford was at that time nearly seventy-five years old, and Lord Cairns was a quarter of a century younger. It is surely not necessary to search for ungenerous or improper motives to explain the act of the new Prime Minister in preferring the one man to the other. Mr. Disraeli merely did his duty. Nothing

could justify a Minister who had the opportunity and the responsibility of such a choice in deciding to retain Lord Chelmsford rather than to bring in Lord Cairns.

No other change was important. Mr. Ward Hunt, a respectable country gentleman of no great position and of moderate abilities, became Chancellor of the Exchequer in the room of Mr. Disraeli. Mr. Walpole, who had been in the Cabinet for some time without office, retired from the Administration altogether. A good deal of work was got through in the session. A bill was introduced to put a stop to the system of public executions, and passed with little difficulty. The only objection raised was urged by those who thought the time had come for abolishing the system of capital punishment altogether. Public executions had long grown to be a scandal to the country. Every voice had been crying out against them. The author of the 'Ingoldsby Legends' had made a public execution the subject of a bitter and painful satire. Dickens had denounced the system with generous vehemence; Thackeray had borne stern testimony to its abominations. A public execution in London was a scene to fill an observer with something like a loathing for the whole human race. Through all the long night before the execution the precincts of the prison became a bivouac ground for the ruffianism of the metropolis. The roughs, the harlots, the professional robbers, and the prospective murderers held high festival there. The air reeked with the smell of strong drink, with filthy jokes and

oaths and blasphemy. The soul took its flight as if it were a trapeze-performer in a circus. The moral effect of the scene, as an example to evil-doers, was about as great as the moral effect of a cock-fight. The demoralising effect, however, was broad and deep. It may be doubted whether one in ten thousand of those who for mere curiosity came to see an execution did not go away a worse creature than he had come. As the old-fashioned intramural burial-ground made by its own vapours new corpses to fill it, so the atmosphere of the public execution generated fresh criminals to exhibit on the scaffold. Posterity will probably wonder how the age which would have scouted the idea of any wholesome effect being wrought by public floggings, could have remained so long under the belief that any manner of good could be done by the system of public executions. Since the change made in 1868, the execution takes place within the precincts of the gaol; it is witnessed by a few selected persons, usually including representatives of the press, and it is certified by the verdict of a coroner's jury.

Another change of ancient system was made by the measure which took away from the House of Commons the power of deciding election petitions. The long-established custom was, that an election petition was referred to a Committee of the House of Commons, who heard the evidence on both sides, and then decided by majority of votes as to the right of the person elected to hold the seat. The system was open to some obvious objections. The one great and crying evil of our electioneering was then the

bribery and corruption which attended it. A Parliamentary Committee could hardly be expected to deal very stringently with bribery, seeing that most of the members of the committee were sure to have carried on or authorised bribery on their own account. A false public conscience had grown up with regard to bribery. Few men held it really in hatred. The country gentleman whose own vote, when once he had been elected, was unpurchasable by any money bribe, thought it quite a natural and legitimate thing that he should buy his seat by corrupting voters. As in a former age no gentleman thought it wrong to seduce a woman, so in a very recent day no man with money thought it improper to spend some of his money in corrupting electors. What censure was it likely a country squire would have got fifty years ago if accused before a council of squires of having seduced some tenant's wife or daughter? Just so much would a rich man have got twenty years ago from a Parliamentary Committee if it were proved that he had allowed his agent to lay out money ingeniously for him in bribes. Then again, the decision of the Parliamentary Committee was very often determined by the political opinions of the majority of its members. Acute persons used to say, that when once the Committee had been formed they could tell what its decision would be. 'Show me the men and I'll show you the decision,' was the principle. It was not always found to be so in practice. A Committee with a Conservative majority did sometimes decide against a Conservative candidate. A Com-

mittee with a majority of Whigs has been known to unseat a Whig occupant. But in general the decision of the Committee was either influenced by the political opinions of its majority, or, what was nearly as bad so far as public influence was concerned, it was believed to be so influenced. There had therefore been for a long time an opinion growing up that something must be done to bring about a reform, and in 1867 a Parliamentary Select Committee reported in favour of abandoning altogether the system of referring election petitions to a tribunal composed of members of the House of Commons. The proposal of this Committee was, that every petition should be referred to one of the Judges of the superior courts at Westminster, with power to decide both law and fact, and to report not only as to the seat but as to the extent of bribery and corruption in the constituency. The Judges themselves strongly objected to having such duties imposed upon them. The Lord Chief Justice stated on their behalf that he had consulted with them, and was charged by them one and all to convey to the Lord Chancellor 'their strong and unanimous feeling of insuperable objection to undertaking functions the effect of which would be to lower and degrade the judicial office, and to destroy, or at all events materially impair, the confidence of the public in the thorough impartiality and inflexible integrity of the Judges, when in the course of their ordinary duties political matters come incidentally before them.' Notwithstanding the objections of the Judges, however, the Government, after

having made one or two unsuccessful experiments at a measure to institute a new court for the trial of election petitions, brought in a bill to refer such petitions to a single Judge, selected from a list to be made by arrangement among the Judges of the three superior courts. This bill, which was to be in operation for three years as an experiment, was carried without much difficulty. It has been renewed since that time, and slightly altered. The principle of referring election petitions to the decision of a legal tribunal remains in force, and it is very unlikely indeed that the House of Commons will ever recover its ancient privilege. Many members of that House still regret the change. They say, and not unreasonably, that with time and the purifying effect of public opinion the objections to the old system would have died away. A Committee of the House of Commons would have come to regard bribery as all honest and decent men must in time regard it. They would acknowledge it a crime and brand it accordingly. So too it is surely probable that members of the House of Commons sitting to hear an election petition would have got over that low condition of political morals which allowed them to give or be suspected of giving their decision for partisan purposes without regard to facts and to justice. On the other hand, it seems a strange anomaly that a Judge may not only declare the candidate of the majority disentitled to a seat, but declare the candidate of the minority entitled to it. In one celebrated case of an Irish election the candidate

elected by an overwhelming majority was unseated by the decision of the Judge; the candidate who had a very small minority of votes in his favour was installed in the seat. It was obviously absurd to call such a man the representative of the constituency. It is right to say that none of the effects anticipated by the Chief Justice were felt in England. The impartiality of the Judges was never called in question. In Ireland it was otherwise, at least in some instances. Judges are rarely appointed in Ireland who have not held law office; and law office is usually obtained by Parliamentary, in other words, by partisan service. There is not therefore always the same confidence in the impartiality of the Judges in Ireland that prevails in England, and it must be owned that in one or two instances at least, the effect of referring an election petition to the decision of an Irish Judge was not by any means favourable to the public faith either in the dignity or the impartiality of the Bench. Of late years some really stringent measures have been taken against bribery. Several boroughs have been disfranchised altogether because of the gross and seemingly ineradicable corruption that prevailed there. Time, education, and public opinion will probably before long cleanse our political system of the stain of bribery. Before long surely it will be accounted as base to give as to take a bribe.

The House of Lords too abandoned about this time one of their ancient usages; the custom of voting by proxy. A Select Committee of the Peers had recommended that the practice should be dis-

continued. It was defended of course, as every antiquated and anomalous practice is sure to be defended. It was urged, for example, that no men can be better qualified to understand the great political questions of the day than members of the House of Peers who are employed in the diplomatic service abroad, and that it is unfair to exclude these men from affirming their opinion by a vote, even though they cannot quit their posts and return home to give the vote in person. This small grievance, if it were one, was very properly held to be of little account when compared with the obvious objections to the practice. The House of Lords, however, were not willing absolutely and for ever to give up the privilege. They only passed a standing order 'that the practice of calling for proxies on a division be discontinued, and that two day's notice be given of any motion for the suspension of the order.' It is not likely that any attempt will be made to suspend the order and renew the obsolete practice.

The Government ventured this year on the bold but judicious step of acquiring possession of all the lines of telegraph, and making the control of communication by wire a part of the business of the Post Office. They did not succeed in making a very good bargain of it, and for a time the new management resulted in the most distracting confusion. But the country highly approved of the purchase. The Post Office has long been one of the best managed departments of the Civil Service.

An important event in the year's history was the

successful conclusion of the expedition into Abyssinia. We have already mentioned that much alarm had long been felt in the country with regard to the fate of a number of British subjects, men and women, who were held in captivity by Theodore King of Abyssinia. A vague mysterious interest hung around Abyssinia. It is a land which claims to have held the primitive Christians, and to have the bones of Saint Mark among its treasury of sacred relics. It held fast to the Christian faith, according to its own views of that faith, when Egypt flung it aside after the Arab invasion. The Abyssinians trace the origin of their empire back to the time of Solomon when the Queen of Sheba visited him. The Emperor or King of Abyssinia was the Prester John, the mysterious king-priest of the middle ages. If Sir John Mandeville may be accepted as any authority, that traveller avers that the title of Prester John rose from the fact that one of the early kings of Abyssinia went with a Christian knight into a Christian Church in Egypt and was so charmed with the service that he vowed he would thenceforth take the title of priest. He further declared, that 'he wolde have the name of the first preest that wente out of the Chirche; and his name was John.' A traveller whom not a few were disposed to class with Sir John Mandeville, brought back to Europe in a later day some marvellous tales of the Abyssinians. An advertisement prefixed to the third volume of Buffon's 'History of Birds,' acknowledges 'the free and generous communication which I had of the drawings

and observations of Mr. James Bruce who, returning from Numidia and the interior parts of Abyssinia, stayed in my house for several days, and made me a partaker of the knowledge which he had acquired in a tour no less fatiguing than hazardous.' The publication of Bruce's 'Travels in Abyssinia,' excited an interest which was further inflamed by the fierce controversy as to the accuracy of his statements and descriptions. Some at least of Bruce's most disputed assertions have been confirmed since his day by the observations of other travellers. The curiosity as to the land of Prester John was revived for modern times by Bruce and the controversy Bruce called up, and in addition to the public anxiety on account of the English prisoners, there was in England a certain vague expectation of marvellous results to come of a military expedition into the land of ancient mystery. Among the captives in Theodore's hands were Captain Cameron, her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, with his secretary and some servants; Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, a Syrian Christian and naturalised subject of the Queen; Lieutenant Prideaux, and Dr. Blanc. These men were made prisoners while actually engaged on official business of the English Government, and the expedition was therefore formally charged to recover them. But there were several other captives as well, whom the Commander-in-Chief was enjoined to take under his protection. There were German missionaries and their wives and children, some of the women being English; some teachers, artists, and workmen, all European. The quarrel

which led to the imprisonment of these people was of old standing. Some of the missionaries had been four years in duresse before the expedition was sent out to their rescue. In April 1865, Lord Chelmsford had called the attention of the House of Lords to the treatment which certain British subjects were then receiving at the hands of Theodore, the Negus or supreme ruler of Abyssinia. Theodore was a usurper. Few Eastern sovereigns who have in any way made their mark on history, from Haroun-al-Raschid and Saladin downwards, can be described by any other name than that of usurper. Theodore seems to have been a man of strong barbaric nature, a compound of savage virtue and more than savage ambition and cruelty. He was a sort of wild and barbarous Philip of Macedon. He was open to passionate and lasting friendships; his nature was swept by stormy gusts of anger and hatred. His moods of fury and of mildness came and went like the thunderstorms and calms of a tropic region. He had had a devoted friendship for Mr. Plowden, a former English Consul at Massowah, who had actually lent Theodore his help in putting down a rebellion, and was killed by the rebels in consequence. When Theodore had crushed the rebellion, he slaughtered more than a hundred of the rebel prisoners as a sacrifice to the manes of his English Patroclus. Captain Cameron was sent to succeed Mr. Plowden. It should be stated that neither Mr. Plowden nor Captain Cameron was appointed Consul for any part of Abyssinia. Massowah is an island off the African shore of the Red

Sea. It is in Turkish ownership and forms no part of Abyssinia, although it is the principal starting point to the interior of that country from Egypt, and the great outlet for Abyssinian trade. Consuls were sent to Massowah, according to the terms of Mr. Plowden's appointment in 1848, 'for the protection of British trade with Abyssinia and with the countries adjacent thereto.' Mr. Plowden, however, had made himself an active ally of King Theodore, a course of proceeding which naturally gave great dissatisfaction to the English Government. Captain Cameron, therefore, received positive instructions to take no part in the quarrels of Theodore and his subjects, and was reminded by Lord John Russell that he held 'no representative character in Abyssinia.' It probably seemed to Theodore that the attitude of England was altered and unfriendly, and thus the dispute began which led to the seizure of the missionaries. Captain Cameron seems to have been much wanting in discretion, and Theodore suspected him of intriguing with Egypt. Theodore wrote a letter to Queen Victoria requesting help against the Turks, and for some reason the letter remained unanswered. A story went that Theodore cherished a strong ambition to become the husband of the Queen of England, and even represented that his descent from the Queen of Sheba made him not unworthy of such an alliance. Whether he ever put his proposals into formal shape or not, it is certain that misunderstandings arose; that Theodore fancied himself slighted; and that he wreaked his wrongs by

seizing all the British subjects within his reach, and throwing them into captivity. They were put in chains and kept in Magdala, his rock-based capital. Consul Cameron was among the number. He had imprudently gone back into Abyssinia from Massowah, and was at once pounced upon by the furious descendant of Prester John.

The English Government had a difficult task before them. It seemed not unlikely that the first movement made by an invading expedition might be the signal for the massacre of the prisoners. The effect of conciliation was therefore tried in the first instance. Mr. Rassam, who held the office of Assistant British Resident at Aden, a man who had acquired some distinction under Mr. Layard in exploring the remains of Nineveh and Babylon, was sent on a mission to Theodore with a message from Queen Victoria. Lieutenant Prideaux and Dr. Blanc were appointed to accompany him. Theodore played with Mr. Rassam for a while, and then added him and his companions to the number of the captives. Theodore seems to have become more and more possessed with the idea that the English Government were slighting him ; and one or two unlucky mishaps or misconceptions gave him some excuse for cherishing the suspicion in his jealous and angry mind. At last an ultimatum was sent by Lord Stanley, demanding the release of the captives within three months on penalty of war. This letter does not seem to have ever reached the King's hands. The Government made preparations for war, and appointed

Sir Robert Napier, now Lord Napier of Magdala, then Commander-in-Chief of the army of Bombay, to conduct the expedition. A winter sitting of Parliament was held in November 1867, supplies were voted, and the expeditionary force set out from Bombay.

The expedition was well managed. Its work was, if we may use a somewhat homely expression, done to time. The military difficulties were not great; but the march had to be made across some four hundred miles of a mountainous and roadless country. The army had to make its way, now under burning sun, and now amid storms of rain and sleet, through broken and perplexing mountain gorges and over mountain heights ten thousand feet above the sea level. Anything like a skilful resistance, even such resistance as savages might well have been expected to make, would have placed the lives of all the force in the utmost danger. The mere work of carrying the supplies safely along through such a country was of itself enough to keep the energies of the invading army on the utmost strain. Meanwhile the captives were dragging out life in the very bitterness of death. The King still oscillated between caprices of kindness and impulses of cruelty. He sometimes strolled in upon the prisoners in careless undress; perhaps in European shirt and trousers, without a coat; and he cheerily brought with him a bottle of wine, which he insisted on the captives sharing with him. At other times he visited them in the mood of one who loved to feast his eyes on the anticipatory terrors of the

victims he has determined to destroy. He had still great faith in the fighting power of his Abyssinians. Sometimes he was in high spirits, and declared that he longed for an encounter with the invaders. At other moments, however, and when the steady certain march of the English soldiers was bringing them nearer and nearer, he seems to have lost heart and become impressed with a boding conviction that nothing would ever go well with him again. One description given of him as he looked into the gathering clouds of an evening sky and drew melancholy auguries of his own fate, makes him appear like a barbaric Antony watching the rack dislimn and likening its dispersion to his own vanishing fortunes. Sir Robert Napier arrived in front of Magdala in the beginning of April 1868. One battle was fought on the tenth of the month. Perhaps it ought not to be called a battle. It is better to say that the Abyssinians made such an attack on the English troops as a bull sometimes makes on a railway train in full motion. The Abyssinians attacked with wild courage and spirit. The English weapons and the English discipline simply swept the assailants away. Others came on; wild charges were made again and again; five hundred Abyssinians were killed and three times as many wounded. Not one of the English force was killed, and only nineteen men were wounded.

Then Theodore tried to come to terms. He sent back all the prisoners, who at last found themselves safe and free under the protection of the English flag. But Theodore would not surrender. Sir Robert

Napier had therefore no alternative but to order an assault on his stronghold. Magdala was perched upon cliffs so high and steep, that it was said a cat could not climb them except at two points—one north, and one south—at each of which a narrow path led up to a strong gateway. The attack was made by the northern path, and despite all the difficulties of the ascent, the attacking party reached the gate, forced it, and captured Magdala. Those who first entered found Theodore's dead body inside the gate. Defeated and despairing he had died in the high Roman fashion: by his own hand.

The rock-fortress of King Theodore was destroyed by the conqueror. Sir Robert Napier was unwilling to leave the place in its strength, because he had little doubt that if he did so it would be seized upon by a fierce Mahomedan tribe, the bitter enemies of the Abyssinian Christians. He therefore dismantled and destroyed the place. 'Nothing,' to use his own language, 'but blackened rock remains' of what was Magdala. The expedition returned to the coast almost immediately. In less than a week after the capture of Magdala it was on its march to the sea. On June 21, the troop-ship *Crocodile* arrived at Plymouth with the first detachment of troops from Abyssinia. Nothing could have been more effectively planned, conducted, and timed than the whole expedition. It went and came to the precise moment appointed for every movement, like an express train. That was its great merit. Warlike difficulties it had none to encounter. No one can doubt that such difficulties

too, had they presented themselves, would have been encountered with success. The struggle was against two tough enemies, climate and mountain; and Sir Robert Napier won. He was made Baron Napier of Magdala, and received a pension. The thanks of both Houses of Parliament were voted to the army of Abyssinia and its commander. It was on this occasion that Mr. Disraeli delivered that astonishing burst of eloquence which for the hour turned the attention of the country away from Lord Napier's triumph, and almost succeeded in making the capture of Magdala seem ridiculous. Lord Napier, Mr. Disraeli declared, had led the elephants of India bearing the artillery of Europe through African passes which might have startled the trapper of Canada and appalled the hunter of the Alps; and he wound up by proclaiming, that 'the standard of St. George was hoisted upon the mountains of Rasselas.' All England smiled at the mountains of Rasselas. The idea that Johnson actually had in his mind the very Abyssinia of geography and of history, when he described his Happy Valley, was in itself trying to gravity. Of the rhetorical passage, it is proper to speak in the words with which the author of Rasselas once interrupted the too ambitious eloquence of a friend. 'Sir, this is sorry stuff,' said Dr. Johnson, 'let me not hear you say it any more.' The worst of Mr. Disraeli's burst of eloquence was, that it could not be got rid of so easily. The orator himself might have gladly consented to let it be heard no more. But the world would not so willingly let it die. Ever

since that time, when the expedition to Abyssinia is mentioned in any company, a smile steals over some faces, and more than one voice is heard to murmur an allusion to the mountains of Rasselas.

The widow of King Theodore died in the English camp before the return of the expedition. Theodore's son Alamayou, aged seven years, was taken charge of by Queen Victoria, and for a while educated in India. The boy was afterwards brought to England; but he never reached maturity. All the care that could be taken of him here did not keep him from withering under the influence of an uncongenial civilisation. His young life was as that of some exotic that will not long bear the transplantation to a foreign air. Doubtless too the premature tumult and troubles of his early years told heavily against him. 'There is little difficulty,' says the grim leech in the 'Fair Maid of Perth,' 'in blighting a flower exhausted from having been made to bloom too soon.'

No attempt was made to interfere with the internal affairs of Abyssinia. Having destroyed their monarchy, the invaders left the Abyssinians to do as they would for the establishment of another. Sir Robert Napier declared one of the chiefs a friend of the British, and this chief had some hopes of obtaining the sovereignty of the country. But his rank as a friend of the British did not prevent him from being defeated in a struggle with a rival, and this latter not long after succeeded in having himself crowned king under the title of John the Second. Another Prester John was set up in Abyssinia.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE IRISH CHURCH.

'THE Irish Peasant to his Mistress' is the name of one of Moore's finest songs. The Irish peasant tells his mistress of his undying fidelity to her. 'Through grief and through danger' her smile has cheered his way. 'The darker our fortunes the purer thy bright love burned'; it turned shame into glory; fear into zeal. Slave as he was, with her to guide him he felt free. She had a rival; and the rival was honoured, 'while thou wert mocked and scorned.' The rival wore a crown of gold; the other's brows were girt with thorns. The rival wooed him to temples, while the loved one lay hid in caves. 'Her friends were all masters, while thine, alas, are slaves!' 'Yet,' he declares, 'cold in the earth at thy feet I would rather be than wed one I love not, or turn one thought from thee.'

The reader already understands the meaning of this poetic allegory. If he failed to appreciate its feeling it would be hardly possible for him to understand the modern history of Ireland. The Irish peasant's mistress is the Catholic Church. The rival is the State Church set up by English authority. The worshippers in the Catholic faith had long to lie

hid in caves, while the followers of the State Church worshipped in temples. The Irish peasant remained through centuries of persecution devotedly faithful to the Catholic Church. Nothing could win or wean him from it. The Irish population of Ireland—there is meaning in the words—were made apparently by nature for the Catholic faith. Hardly any influence on earth could make the genuine Celtic Irishman a Materialist, or what is called in France a Voltairean. For him, as for Schiller's immortal heroine, the kingdom of the spirits is easily opened. Half his thoughts, half his life, belong to a world other than the material world around him. The supernatural becomes almost the natural for him. The streams, the valleys, the hills of his native country are peopled by mystic forms and melancholy legends, which are all but living things for him. Even the railway has not banished from the land his familiar fancies and dreams. The 'good people' still linger around the raths and glens. The banshee even yet laments, in dirge-like wailings, the death of the representative of each ancient house. The very superstitions of the Irish peasant take a devotional form. They are never degrading. His piety is not merely sincere: it is even practical. It sustains him against many hard trials, and enables him to bear, in cheerful patience, a life-long trouble. He praises God for everything; not as an act of mere devotional formality, but as by instinct; the praise naturally rising to his lips. Old men and women in Ireland who seem, to the observer, to have lived lives of nothing but privation

and suffering, are heard to murmur with their latest breath the fervent declaration that the Lord was good to them always. Assuredly this genuine piety does not always prevent the wild Celtic nature from breaking forth into fierce excesses. Stormy outbursts of passion, gusts of savage revenge, too often sweep away the soul of the Irish peasant from the quiet moorings in which his natural piety and the teachings of his Church would hold it. But deep down in his nature is that faith in the other world and its visible connection and intercourse with this; his reverence for the teaching which shows him a clear title to immortality. For this very reason, when the Irish peasant throws off altogether the guidance of religion, he is apt to rush into worse extravagances and excesses than most other men. He is not made to be a rationalist; he is made to be a believer.

The Irishman was bound by ties of indescribable strength and complication to his own Church. It was the teacher of that faith which especially commended itself to his nature and his temperament. It was made to be the symbol and the synonym of patriotism and nationality. Centuries of the cruel, futile attempt to force another religion on him in the name of his English conquerors, had made him regard any effort to change his faith, even by argument, as the attempt of a spy to persuade a soldier to forsake his flag. To abandon the Catholic Church was, for the Irishman, not merely to renounce his religion, but to betray his country. It seemed to him that he could not become a Protestant without also becoming

a renegade to the national cause. The State Church set up in Ireland was to him a symbol of oppression. It was Gessler's hat stuck up in the market-place; only a slave would bow down to it. It was idle to tell him of the free spirit of Protestantism; Protestantism stood represented for him by the authority which had oppressed his fellow-countrymen and fellow-Catholics for generations; which had hunted men to the caves and the mountains for being Catholic, and had hanged and disembowelled them for being Irish. Almost every page of the history of the two countries was read with a different interpretation by the Irishman and the Englishman. To the English student Spenser was a patriot as well as a poet; to the Irish scholar he was the bitterest and most unthinking enemy of Ireland. To the Englishman of modern days Cromwell was a great statesman and patriot; the Irishman thought of him only as the remorseless oppressor of Ireland and the author of the massacre of Drogheda. The Englishman hated James II. because he fought against England at the Boyne; the Irishman despised him because he gave up the fight so soon. Chesterfield was to Englishmen a fribble and a fop; he was to Irishmen of education the one English Lord-Lieutenant who ever seemed to have any comprehension of the real needs of Ireland. Fox was denounced in England and adored in Ireland because he made himself the champion of the principle of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas. One of Byron's chief offences in the eyes of English Conservatives was that his

enthusiasm for Ireland was almost equal to his enthusiasm for Greece. Again and again, in every generation, the object of admiration to Englishmen was the object of distrust or dislike, or both, to all Irishmen who professed to have in them anything of the sentiment of nationality. All this feeling of antagonism was undoubtedly strengthened and sharpened by the existence of the State Church. There was not one rational word to be said on principle for the maintenance of such an institution. Sydney Smith said, in his humorous way: 'There is no abuse like it in all Europe, in all Asia, in all the discovered parts of Africa, and in all we have heard of Timbuctoo.' No foreign statesman probably ever admired English institutions more than Count Cavour did. Yet Cavour wrote that the State Church in Ireland 'remains to the Catholics a representative of the cause of their miseries, a sign of defeat and oppression. It exasperates their sufferings and makes their humiliation more keenly felt.' Every argument in favour of the State Church in England was an argument against the State Church in Ireland. The English Church, as an institution, is defended on the ground that it represents the religious convictions of the great majority of the English people, and that it is qualified to take welcome charge of those who would otherwise be left without any religious care or teaching in England. The Catholics in Ireland were, to all other denominations together, as five to one; the State Church represented only a small proportion of a very small minority. There was

not the slightest pretext for affecting to believe that it could become the mother and the guardian of orphans and waifs among the Irish people. In many places the Protestant clergyman preached to a dozen listeners ; in some places he thought himself lucky when he could get half a dozen. There were places with a Protestant clergyman and Protestant church and absolutely no Protestant worshippers. There had not of late years been much positive hostility to the State Church among the Irish people. Since the abolition of the system of tithes, since the dues of the parson were no longer collected by an armed military force with occasional accompaniment of bloodshed, the bitterness of popular feeling had very much mitigated. The Irish people grew to be almost indifferent on the subject. 'With Henry II.,' says Sydney Smith, 'came in tithes, to which, in all probability, about one million of lives may have been sacrificed in Ireland.' All that was changed at last. So long as the clergyman was content to live quietly and mind his own flock, where he had any to mind, his Catholic neighbours were not disposed to trouble themselves much about him. If, indeed, he attempted to do that which, by all strict logical reasoning, he must have regarded himself as appointed to do—if he attempted any work of conversion, then he aroused such a storm of anger that he generally found it prudent to withdraw from the odious and hopeless enterprise. If he was a sensible man he was usually content to minister to his own people and meddle no further with others. In the large towns he generally

had his considerable congregation, and was busy enough. In some of the country places of the south and west he preached every Sunday to his little flock of five or six, while the congregation of the Catholic chapel a short distance off were covering great part of the hillside around the chapel door, because their numbers were many times too great to allow them to find room within the building itself. Sydney Smith has described, in a few words, the condition of things as it existed in his time: 'On an Irish Sabbath the bell of a neat parish church often summons to church only the parson and an occasionally conforming clerk; while two hundred yards off a thousand Catholics are huddled together in a miserable hovel and pelted by all the storms of heaven.' In days nearer to our own the miserable hovel had for the most part given place to a large and handsome church; in many places to a vast and stately cathedral. Nothing could be more remarkable than the manner in which the voluntary offerings of the Irish Catholics covered the face of the country with churches dedicated to the uses of their faith. Often the contributions came in liberal measure from Irishmen settled in far-off countries who were not likely ever again to see their native fields. Irish Catholic priests crossed the Atlantic, crossed even the Pacific, to ask for help to maintain their churches; and there came from Quebec and Ontario, from New York, New Orleans and Chicago, from Melbourne and Sydney, from Tasmania and New Zealand, the money which put up churches and spires on the Irish mountain-sides.

The proportion between the Protestants and the Catholics began to tell more and more disadvantageously for the State Church as years went on. Of late the influx of the Catholic working population into the northern province threatens to overthrow the supremacy of Protestantism in Protestantism's own stronghold.

It has often been said that if England had not persecuted the Catholics, if she had not thrust her State Church on them under circumstances which made it an insolent badge of conquest, the Irish people might have been gradually won over to the religion of England. To us nothing seems more unlikely than any such change. The Irish people, we are convinced, would under any circumstances whatever have remained faithful to the Catholic Church. As we have already endeavoured to show, it is the Church which seems specially appointed to be the guide of their feelings and their nature. But it is certain that if there had been no persecution and no State Church the feelings of the Irish people towards England would have been very different from what they actually are even at this day. There would have been no rebellion of 1798. There would have been no hatred of Protestant to Catholic, Catholic to Protestant. All this is obvious; everyone says as much now. But there is another view of the question; there is another harmful effect of the State Church and its surroundings, which is not so often considered nor so commonly admitted. This is the indirect harm which was done by the setting up in Ireland of a 'British party,' to employ a phrase once

familiar in politics, a party supposed to represent the interests of the English Government, and indeed to be, as it was commonly called, the Protestant garrison in Ireland. Naturally the Government always acted on the advice of that party, and as a matter of course they were frequently deceived. The British party had no way of getting at the real feelings of the Irish people; they were among them, but not of them. They kept on continually assuring the Government that there was no real cause of dissatisfaction in Ireland; that the objection to this or that odious institution or measure came only from a few agitators, and not from the whole population. It will not be forgotten that down to the very outbreak of the American War of Independence there were the remnants of a British party in the Northern States, who assured the English Government that there was no real dissatisfaction among the American colonists, and no idea whatever of severing the connection with England. The same sort of counsel was given, the same fatal service was rendered, on almost all important occasions by the British party in Ireland. It was probably from observing this condition of things that Mr. Gladstone came to the conclusion that the Fenian outbreak, the Manchester rescue, and the Clerkenwell explosion furnished a proper opportunity for a new system of legislation in Ireland. Few actions on the part of a public man have been more persistently misrepresented or more obstinately misunderstood than the course taken by Mr. Gladstone. It has been constantly asserted that

he declared himself impelled to propose new legislation for Ireland by the violence of the Fenian enterprises, and that he thus held out a premium to political agitation of the most audacious kind by offering an assurance to the agitator that if he would only be daring and lawless enough he might have full gratification of his demands. Yet Mr. Gladstone's meaning was surely plain. He saw that the one great difficulty in the way of substantial legislation for Irish grievances had always been found in the fact that the English Parliament and public did not believe in the reality of the grievance. Englishmen put aside every claim made on behalf of Ireland with the assurance that the Irish people were entirely indifferent on the subject; that the Irish people felt no grievance, and therefore had not complained of any. The Fenian movement was in Mr. Gladstone's eyes the most substantial refutation of this comfortable belief. The most easy-going and self-complacent Philistine could not feel satisfied that there was no grievance pressing on the minds of the Irish people when he found rebellion going on under his very eyes, and Fenian devotees braving death for their cause and its captains in his very streets. Mr. Gladstone was right. One of the sad defects of our parliamentary system is that no remedy is likely to be tried for any evil until the evil has made its presence felt in some startling way. The Clerkenwell explosion was but one illustration of a common condition of things. We seldom have any political reform without a previous explosion.

On March 16, 1868, a remarkable debate took place in the House of Commons. It had for its subject the condition of Ireland, and it was introduced by a series of resolutions which Mr. John Francis Maguire, an Irish member, proposed. Mr. Maguire was a man of high character and great ability and earnestness. He was a newspaper proprietor and an author; he knew Ireland well, but he also knew England and the temper of the English people. He was ardent in his national sympathies; but he was opposed to any movement of a seditious or a violent character. He had more than once risked his popularity among his countrymen by the resolute stand which he made against any agitation that tended towards rebellion. Mr. Maguire always held that the geographical situation of England and Ireland rendered a separation of the two countries impossible. He had often expressed his belief that even in the event of a war between England and some foreign State—the American Republic, for instance—and even in the event of England's losing temporary possession of Ireland, one of the conditions of peace which the foreign Power would most freely accept would be the handing back of Ireland to Great Britain. To his mind, then, separation was a result not to be seriously thought of. But he accepted cordially the saying of Grattan that if the ocean forbade separation, the sea denied union. He was in favour of a domestic legislature for Ireland, and he was convinced that such a measure would be found the means of establishing a true and genial union of

feeling, a friendly partnership between the two countries. Mr. Maguire was looked on with respect and confidence by all parties in England as well as in his own country. Even the Fenians, whose schemes he condemned as he had condemned the Young Ireland movement of 1848, were willing to admit his honesty and his courage, for they found that there was no stauncher advocate in Parliament for a generous dealing with the Fenian prisoners. A speaker of remarkable power and earnestness, although occasionally too vehement of words and gesture, he was always listened to with attention in the House of Commons. It was well known that he had declined tenders of office from both of the great English parties; and it was known too that he had done this at a time when his personal interests made his refusal a considerable sacrifice. When therefore he invited the attention of the House of Commons to the condition of Ireland, the House knew that it was likely to have a fair and a trustworthy exposition of the subject. In the course of his speech, Mr. Maguire laid great stress upon the evil effect wrought upon Ireland by the existence of the Irish Church. He described it as 'a scandalous and monstrous anomaly.' During the debate Lord Mayo, then Irish Secretary, made a speech in which he threw out some hint about a policy of equalising all religious denominations in Ireland without sacrificing the Irish Church. He talked in a mysterious way of 'levelling up, and not levelling down.' It has never since been known for certain whether he was giving a hint of a scheme

actually in the mind of the Government; whether he was speaking as one set up to feel his way into the opinion of the House of Commons and the public; or whether he was only following out some sudden and irresponsible speculations of his own. The words, however, produced a great effect on the House of Commons. It became evident at once that the question of the Irish Church was making itself at last a subject for the practical politician. Mr. Bright in the course of the debate strongly denounced the Irish Establishment, and enjoined the Government and all the great English parties to rise to the occasion and resolve to deal in some serious way with the condition of Ireland. Difficulties of the gravest nature he fully admitted were yet in the way, but he reminded the House in tones of solemn and penetrating earnestness that 'to the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.' But it was on the fourth night of the debate that the importance of the occasion became fully manifest. Then it was that Mr. Gladstone spoke, and declared that in his opinion the time had come when the Irish Church as a State institution must cease to exist. Then every man in the House knew that the end was near. Mr. Maguire withdrew his resolutions. The cause he had to serve was now in the hands of one who, though not surely more earnest for its success, had incomparably greater power to serve it. The Protestant garrison in Ireland was doomed. There was probably not a single Englishman capable of forming an opinion who did not know that from the moment when Mr. Gladstone made his

declaration, the fall of the Irish State Church had become merely a question of time. Men only waited to see how Mr. Gladstone would proceed to procure its fall.

Public expectation was not long kept in suspense. A few days after the debate on Mr. Maguire's motion, Mr. Gladstone gave notice of a series of resolutions on the subject of the Irish State Church. The resolutions were three in number. The first declared that in the opinion of the House of Commons it was necessary that the Established Church of Ireland should cease to exist as an Establishment, due regard being had to all personal interests and to all individual rights of property. The second resolution pronounced it expedient to prevent the creation of new personal interests by the exercise of any public patronage; and the third asked for an address to the Queen, praying that Her Majesty would place at the disposal of Parliament her interest in the temporalities of the Irish Church. The object of these resolutions was simply to prepare for the actual disestablishment of the Church, by providing that no further appointments should be made, and that the action of patronage should be stayed, until Parliament should decide the fate of the whole institution. On March 30, 1868, Mr. Gladstone proposed his resolutions. Not many persons could have had much doubt as to the result of the debate. But if there were any such their doubts must have begun to vanish when they read the notice of amendment to the resolutions which was given by Lord Stanley.

The amendment proclaimed even more surely than the resolutions the impending fall of the Irish Church. Lord Stanley must have been supposed to speak in the name of the Government and the Conservative party; and his amendment merely declared that the House, while admitting that considerable modifications in the temporalities of the Church in Ireland might appear to be expedient, was of opinion 'that any proposition tending to the disestablishment or disendowment of that Church ought to be reserved for the decision of the new Parliament.' Mr. Gladstone seized on the evidence offered by the terms of such an amendment. He observed that before the hour at which notice was given of that amendment, he had thought the thread of the remaining life of the Irish Established Church was short, but since the notice was given he thought it shorter still. For, as Mr. Gladstone put it, suppose his resolutions had been declarations calling for the abolition of the House of Lords, was it possible to conceive that the Government would have met them by an amendment admitting that the constitution of the Upper House might appear to stand in need of considerable modification, but offering the opinion that any proposal tending to the abolition of that House ought to be left to the decision of a new Parliament? If such an amendment were offered by the Government, the whole country would at once understand that it was not intended to defend the existence of the House of Lords. So the country now understood with regard to the Irish Church. Lord Stanley's amendment asked only for delay. It

did not plead that to-morrow would be sudden; it only asked that the stroke of doom should not be allowed to fall on the Irish Church to-day.

The debate was one of great power and interest. Some of the speakers were heard at their very best. Mr. Bright made a speech which was well worthy of the occasion and the orator. Mr. Gathorne Hardy was in his very element. He flung aside all consideration of amendment, compromise, or delay, and went in for a vehement defence of the Irish Church. He spoke in the spirit of M. Rouher's famous *Jamais!* Mr. Hardy was not a debater of keen logical power nor an orator of genuine inspiration, but he always could rattle a defiant drum with excellent effect. He beat the war-drum this time with tremendous energy. On the other hand Mr. Lowe threw an intensity of bitterness remarkable even for him into the unsparing logic with which he assailed the Irish Church. That Church, he said, was 'like an exotic brought from a far country, tended with infinite pains and useless trouble. It is kept alive with the greatest difficulty and at great expense in an ungenial climate and an ungrateful soil. The curse of barrenness is upon it. It has no leaves, puts forth no blossom, and yields no fruit. Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?' Not the least remarkable speech of the debate was that made by Lord Cranbourne, who denounced the Government of which he was not long since a member with an energy of hatred almost like ferocity. He accused his late colleagues of having in every possible way betrayed the cause of Conservatism,

and he assailed Mr. Disraeli personally in a manner which made older members think of the days when Mr. Disraeli was denouncing Sir Robert Peel. No eloquence and no invective however could stay the movement begun by Mr. Gladstone. When the division was called there were 270 votes for the amendment, and 331 against it. The doom of the Irish Church was pronounced by a majority of 61. Mr. Disraeli made a wild effort by speech and by letter to get up an alarm in the country on the score of some imaginary alliance or conspiracy between 'High Church Ritualists' and 'Irish Romanists.' The attempt was a complete failure; there was only a little flash; no explosion came. The country did not show the slightest alarm. An interval was afforded for agitation on both sides. The House of Commons had only decided against Lord Stanley's amendment. Mr. Gladstone's resolutions had yet to be discussed. Lord Russell presided at a great meeting held in St. James's Hall for the purpose of expressing public sympathy with the movement to disestablish the Irish Church. Many meetings were held by those on the other side of the question as well; but it was obvious to every one that there was no great force in the attempt at a defence of the Irish Church. That institution had in truth a position which only became less and less defensible the more it was studied. Every example and argument drawn from the history of the Church of England was but another condemnation of the Church of Ireland. During one of the subsequent debates in the House

of Lords, Lord Derby introduced with remarkable effect an appropriate quotation from Scott's 'Guy Mannering.' He was warning his listeners that if they helped the enemies of the Irish Church to pull it down, they would be preparing the way for the destruction of the English Church as well. He turned to that striking passage in 'Guy Mannering,' where Meg Merrilies confronts the laird of Ellangowan after the eviction of the gipsies, and warns him that 'this day have ye quenched seven smoking hearths;—see if the fire in your ain parlour burn the blyther for that; ye have riven the thack off seven cottar houses—look if your ain roof-tree stand the faster.' Nothing could be more apt as a political appeal or more effective in a rhetorical sense than this quotation. But it did not illustrate the relations between the English and the Irish Church. The real danger to the English Church would have been a protracted and obstinate maintenance of the Church of Ireland. It is not necessary here to enter upon any of the general arguments for or against the principle of a State Church. But it will be admitted by every one that the claim made on behalf of the Church of England is that it is the Church of the great majority of the English people, and that it has a spiritual work to do which the majority of the nation admit to be its appropriate task. To maintain the Church of England on that ground is only to condemn the Church of Ireland. The more strongly an Englishman was inclined to support his own Church, the more anxious he ought to have been to repudiate the claim of the Irish

Church to a similar position. The State Church in Ireland was like a mildewed ear blasting its wholesome brother. If the two institutions had to stand or fall together, there could be but one end to the difficulty; both must fall.

Mr. Gladstone's first resolution came to a division about a month after the defeat of Lord Stanley's amendment. It was carried by a majority somewhat larger than that which had rejected the amendment. 330 votes were given for the resolution; 265 against it. The majority for the resolution was therefore 65. Mr. Disraeli quietly observed that the Government must take some decisive step in consequence of that vote; and a few days afterwards it was announced that as soon as the necessary business could be got through, Parliament would be dissolved and an appeal made to the country. On the last day of July the dissolution took place, and the elections came on in November. Not for many years had there been so important a general election. The keenest anxiety prevailed as to its results. The new constituencies created by the Reform Bill were to give their votes for the first time. The question at issue was not merely the existence of the Irish State Church. It was a general struggle of advanced Liberalism against Toryism. No one could doubt that Mr. Gladstone, if he came into power, would enter on a policy of more decided Liberalism than had ever been put into action since the days of the Reform Bill of Lord Grey and Lord John Russell. The result of the elections was on the whole what

might have been expected. The Liberals had a great majority. But there were many curious and striking instances of the growing strength of Conservatism in certain parts of the country. Lancashire, once a very stronghold of Liberalism, returned only Tories for its county divisions, and even in most cases elected Tories to represent its boroughs. Eight Conservatives came in for the county of Lancaster, and among those whom their election displaced were no less eminent persons than Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington. Mr. Gladstone was defeated in South-west Lancashire, but the result of the contest had been generally anticipated, and therefore some of his supporters put him up for Greenwich also and he was elected there. He had been passing step by step from less popular to more popular constituencies. From the University of Oxford he had passed to the Lancashire division, and now from the Lancashire constituency he went on to a place where the Liberal portion of the electors were inclined, for the most part, to be not merely Radical but democratic. The contest in North Lancashire was made more interesting than it would otherwise have been by the fact that it was not alone a struggle between opposing principles and parties, but also one between two great rival houses. Lord Hartington represented the great Cavendish family. Mr. Frederick Stanley was the younger son of Lord Derby. Lord Hartington was defeated by a large majority, and was left out of Parliament for a few months. He was afterwards elected for the Radnor Boroughs. Mr.

Mill was defeated at Westminster. His defeat was brought about by a combination of causes. He had been elected in a moment of sudden enthusiasm, and the enthusiasm had now had time to cool away. He had given some offence in various quarters by a too great independence of action and of expression. On many questions of deep interest he had shown that he was entirely out of harmony with the views of the vast majority of his constituents, whatever their religious denomination might be. He had done some things which people called eccentric, and an English popular constituency does not love eccentricity. His opponent, Mr. W. H. Smith, was very popular in Westminster, and had been quietly canvassing it for years. Perhaps it may be hinted too that Mr. Mill's manly resolve not to pay any part of his election expenses did not contribute to make him a favourite candidate with a certain proportion of the constituency. He was known to be a generous and a charitable man. He gave largely out of his modest fortune towards any purpose which he thought deserving of support. But he disapproved of the principle of calling on a candidate to pay for permission to perform very onerous public duties, and he would not consent to recognise the principle by contributing anything towards the cost of his own candidature. This was against him in the mind of many. In every great constituency there is a certain proportion of voters who like the idea of a man's being liberal of his money in a contest, even though they do not expect to have any share of it. Some

of the Westminster electors had probably grown tired of being represented by one who was called a philosopher. Some other prominent public men lost their seats. Mr. Roebuck was defeated in Sheffield. His defeat was partly due to the strong stand he had made against the trades unions; but still more to the bitterness of the hostility he had shown to the Northern States during the American Civil War. Mr. Milner Gibson and Mr. Bernal Osborne were also unseated. The latter got into Parliament again. The former disappeared from public life. He had done good service at one time as an ally of Cobden and Bright. Mr. Lowe was elected the first representative of the University of London, on which, as it will be remembered, the Conservative Reform Bill had conferred a seat. Mr. Disraeli afterwards humorously claimed the credit of having enabled Mr. Lowe to carry on his public career by providing for him the only constituency in England which would have accepted him as its representative. One curious fact about the elections was that the extreme democratic candidates, and those who were called the working men's candidates, were in every instance rejected. This was the first general election with household suffrage in boroughs and a lowered franchise in counties. It might have been supposed that the votes of the working men, of 'the people who live in those small houses' would have decided many a contest in favour of the candidates representing their cause or their class. But the candidates who appealed especially to working men failed in every

instance to secure election. Mr. Ernest Jones, Mr. Beales, Mr. Mason Jones, Mr. Odger, Mr. Bradlaugh, tried and failed. Either our new masters were not so powerful as they were expected to prove, or they were very much like our old masters in their taste for representation. The new Parliament was to all appearance less marked in its Liberalism than that which had gone before it. But so far as mere numbers went the Liberal party was much stronger than it had been. In the new House of Commons it could count upon a majority of about 120, whereas in the late Parliament it had but 60. Mr. Gladstone it was clear would now have everything in his own hands, and the country might look for a career of energetic reform.

While the debates on Mr. Gladstone's resolutions were still going on there came to England the news that Lord Brougham was dead. He had died at Cannes in his ninetieth year. His death was a quiet passing away from a world that had well-nigh forgotten him. Seldom has a political career been so strangely cut short as that of Lord Brougham. From the time when the Whig Administration was formed without him, he seemed to have no particular business in public life. He never had from that hour the slightest influence on any political party or any political movement. His restless figure was seen moving about the House of Lords like that of a man who felt himself out of place there, and was therefore out of humour with himself and his company. He often took part in debate, and for many years he

continued to show all the fire and energy of his earlier days. But of late he had almost entirely dropped out of politics. Happily for him the Social Science Association was formed, and he acted for a long time as its principal guide, philosopher, and friend. He made speeches at its meetings, presided at many of its banquets, and sometimes showed that he could still command the resources of a massive eloquence. His social science had a curious air of unreality about it. It seemed as if it had been hastily put together out of that *Penny Cyclopædia* in which at one time he had so much concern. The men of the younger generation looked at him with interest and wonder; they found it hard to realise the fact that only a few years before he was one of the most conspicuous and energetic figures in political agitation. Now he seemed oddly like some dethroned king who occupies his leisure in botanical studies; some once famous commander, long out of harness, who amuses himself with learning the flute. There were perhaps some who forgot Brougham the great reformer altogether, and only thought of Brougham the patron and orator of the Social Science Association. He passed his time between Cannes, which he may be said to have discovered, and London. At one time he had had the idea of actually becoming a citizen of France, being of opinion that it would set a good example for the brotherhood of peoples if he were to show how a man could be a French and an English citizen at the same moment. He had out-lived nearly all his early friends and foes. Mel-

bourne, Grey, Durham, Campbell, Lyndhurst, had passed away. The death of Lyndhurst had been a great grief to him. It is said that in his failing, later years he often directed his coachman to drive him to Lord Lyndhurst's house, as if his old friend and gossip were still among the living. At last Brougham began to give unmistakable signs of vanishing intelligence. His appearances in public were mournful exhibitions. He sometimes sat at a dinner-party and talked loudly to himself of something which had no concern with the time, the place, or the company. His death created but a mere momentary thrill of emotion in England. He had made bitter enemies and cherished strong hatreds in his active years ; and like all men who have strong hatreds, he had warm affections too. But the close friends and the bitter enemies were gone alike ; had 'passed like snow, long, long ago, with the time of the Barmecides ;' and the agitation about the Irish Church was scarcely interrupted for a moment by the news of his death. Brougham's writings are not read now. No one turns to his speeches ; those speeches that once set England aflame. His philosophy, his learning, his science, his Greek were all so curiously superficial, that it is no wonder if enemies sometimes declared them to be mere sham. As the memoirs of his contemporaries begin to be published we receive more and more evidence of the prodigious vanity which made Brougham believe that no one could do anything so well in any department as he could do everything in every department. The *Edinburgh*

Review he appears to have regarded as a means by which he was to display the genius and acquirements, and others were to puff the speeches, of Henry Brougham. A strange sight was seen one day at a meeting of the Social Science Association, when Lord Brougham, then on the eve of his complete intellectual decline, introduced to the company a man so old that he seemed to belong to an elder world altogether ; a man with a wasted, wrinkled, wizard-like face, who wore a black silk skull-cap and a gaberdine. This was Robert Owen, and it was Owen's last appearance in public. He died a few days after in his ninetieth year. Brougham at that time was ten years younger, and he introduced Owen with all the respectful and almost filial carefulness which sturdy youth might show to sinking age. For the moment it would almost seem as if the self-conceit which made Brougham believe himself a great critic and a great Greek scholar, had made him also believe that for him time was nothing, and that he was still a young man.

CHAPTER LVIII.

'IRISH IDEAS.'

SEVENTY years before Mr. Gladstone's accession to the office of First Lord of the Treasury, Fox had enunciated the principle that Ireland ought to be governed by Irish ideas. 'I would have the Irish Government,' said Fox in 1797, 'regulated by Irish notions and Irish prejudices; and I firmly believe, according to an Irish expression, that the more she is under Irish government, the more she will be bound to English interests.' Now for the first time a great statesman at the head of an English Government was about to make an effort at the practical realisation of Fox's principle. At all other times even the most considerate of English Ministers had only thought of doing good to Ireland after the English notion of what was good. The highest idea of statesmanship went no farther than that of giving Ireland what were called equal laws with England. What England had and liked must be the best for Ireland. Such was the position assumed with quiet, sincere complacency in the course of many a parliamentary debate. What more, it was asked, can Ireland want? Has she not equal laws with England? We have a State Church; she has a State Church.

She has the same land laws that are found to suit England, or, at least, that are found to suit the landlord class in England. What can England do for her more than to give her the same legislation that England herself enjoys? Now, for the first time, the man at the head of an English Government was equal to an acknowledgment of what one might have thought the simple and elementary fact in politics, that the system which is a blessing to one country may be a curse to its neighbour. That which is called equality of system is sometimes only such equality as that illustrated by the too often quoted yet very appropriate example of Procrustes' bed. Ireland had been stretched upon that bed for centuries, often with the best possible intentions on the part of some well-meaning political Procrustes, who could not for the life of him see why she should not like to be lengthened or shortened, pulled this way or that, in order to bring her into seeming harmony with the habitudes and the constitutional systems of England.

The Parliament which was called together in the close of 1868 was known to have before it this great task of endeavouring to govern Ireland according to Irish ideas. Mr. Gladstone had proclaimed this purpose himself. He had made it known that he would endeavour to deal with Ireland's three great difficulties—the State Church, the tenure of land, and the system of national education. Men's minds were wrought up to the enterprise. The country was in a temper to try heroic remedies. The public were tired

of government which merely tinkered at legislation, putting in a little patch here, and stopping up for the moment a little hole there. Perhaps, therefore, there was a certain disappointment as the general character of the new Parliament began to be understood. The eminent men on whom all eyes turned in the old Parliament were to be seen of all eyes in the new. It was clear that Mr. Gladstone would be master of the situation. But there did not seem anything particularly hero-like in the general aspect of the new House of Commons. Its composition was very much the same as that of the old. Vast sums of money had been spent upon the elections. Rich men were, as before, in immense preponderance. Elder and younger sons of great families were as many as ever. The English constituencies under the new suffrage were evidently no whit less fond of lords, no whit less devoted to wealth, than they had been under the old. Not a single man of extreme democratic opinions had a seat in the new House of Commons. Where any marked change had been made it showed itself in removing such men from Parliament rather than in returning them to it.

Mr. Disraeli did not meet the new Parliament as Prime Minister. He decided very properly that it would be a mere waste of public time to wait for the formal vote of the House of Commons, which would inevitably command him to surrender. He at once resigned his office, and Mr. Gladstone was immediately sent for by the Queen, and invited to form an Administration. Mr. Gladstone, it would

seem, was only beginning his career. He was nearly sixty years of age, but there were scarcely any evidences of advancing years to be seen on his face, and he had all the fire of proud, indomitable youth in his voice and his manner. He had come into office at the head of a powerful party. There was hardly anything he could not do with such a following and with such personal energy. The Government he formed was one of remarkable strength. The one name upon its list, after that of the Prime Minister himself, which engaged the interest of the public was that of Mr. Bright. Speaking to his Birmingham constituents on his re-election after accepting the office of the President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Bright referred to his new position in a few sentences of impressive and dignified eloquence. He had not sought office, he said; it had come to him. 'I should have preferred much to remain in the common rank of the simple citizenship in which hereto fore I have lived. There is a charming story contained in a single verse of the Old Testament, which has often struck me as one of great beauty. Many of you will recollect that the prophet, in journeying to and fro, was very hospitably entertained by what is termed in the Bible a Shunammite woman. In return for the hospitality of his entertainment he wished to make her some amends, and he called her and asked her what there was that he should do for her. "Shall I speak for thee to the king or to the captain of the host?" and it has always appeared to me a great answer that the Shunammite woman re-

turned. She said, "I dwell among my own people." When the question was put to me whether I would step into the position in which I now find myself, the answer from my heart was the same—I wish to dwell among my own people.' It was impossible, however, that a ministry could now be formed without Mr. Bright's name appearing in it. Mr. Gladstone at first offered him the office of Secretary of State for India. The state of Mr. Bright's health would not allow him to undertake the very laborious duties of such a place, and probably in any case it would have been repugnant to his feelings to accept a position which might have called on him to give orders for the undertaking of a war. Every man in a Cabinet is of course responsible for all its acts; but there is still an evident difference, so far as personal feeling is concerned, between acquiescing in some inevitable policy of war and actually directing that war shall be made. The position of President of the Board of Trade was that which had been offered by Lord Palmerston to Mr. Bright's old friend, Richard Cobden, and it seemed in every way well suited to Mr. Bright himself. Many men felt a doubt as to the possibility of Mr. Bright's subduing his personal independence and his outspoken ways to the discipline and reticence of a Cabinet, and Mr. Bright himself appeared to be a little afraid that he should be understood as thoroughly approving of every measure in which he might, by official order, feel compelled to acquiesce. He cautioned his Birmingham constituents not to believe that he had changed any of his

opinions until his own voice publicly proclaimed the change, and he made what might almost be called an appeal to them to remember that he was now one man serving in a band of men; no longer responsible only for himself, no longer independent of the acts of others.

Lord Granville was Secretary for the Colonies under the new Administration; Lord Clarendon Foreign Secretary. The Duke of Argyll was entrusted with the Indian Office. Mr. Cardwell, to all appearance one of the coldest and least warlike of men, was made Secretary for War, and had in his charge one of the greatest reforms of the administration. Lord Hartington, Lord Dufferin, Mr. Childers, and Mr. Bruce had places assigned to them. Mr. Layard became First Commissioner of Public Works. Mr. W. E. Forster had the office of Vice-President of the Council, and came in for work hardly less important than that of the Prime Minister himself. The Lord Chancellor was Lord Hatherley, formerly Sir William Page Wood. Many years before, when Lord Hatherley was only known as a rising man among advanced Liberals, and when Mr. Bright was still regarded by all true Conservatives as a Radical demagogue, Mr. Bright and Mr. Wood were talking of the political possibilities of the future. Mr. Bright jestingly expressed a hope that whenever he came to be member of a Cabinet, Mr. Wood might be the Lord Chancellor. Nothing could then have seemed less likely to come to pass. As Lord Hatherley and Mr. Bright met on their way to Windsor to wait on the

Queen, Mr. Bright reminded his colleague of the jest that had apparently been prophetic.

Mr. Gladstone went to work at once with his Irish policy. The new Parliament was opened by commission on December 10, for the election of Speaker and the swearing in of the members. The real work of the session began on the 16th of the following February 1869. The Royal speech declared that the ecclesiastical arrangements of Ireland would be brought under the consideration of the House at a very early date, and that 'the legislation which will be necessary in order to their final adjustment will make the largest demands on the wisdom of Parliament.' The Queen expressed her conviction that Parliament, in considering that legislation, would 'be governed by the constant aim to promote the welfare of religion through the principles of equal justice; to secure the action of the undivided feeling and opinion of Ireland on the side of loyalty and law; to efface the memory of former contentions, and to cherish the sympathies of an affectionate people.' On March 1 the Prime Minister introduced his measure for the disestablishment and the partial disendowment of the Irish State Church. He introduced the measure in a speech which occupied more than three hours in the delivery, but which even Mr. Disraeli admitted did not contain one sentence that the subject and the argument could well have spared.

The proposals of the Government were, that the Irish Church should almost at once cease to exist as a State establishment, and should pass into the con-

dition of a free Episcopal Church. As a matter of course the Irish bishops were to lose their seats in the House of Lords. A synodal, or governing body, was to be elected from the clergy and laity of the Church and was to be recognised by the Government, and duly incorporated. The union between the Churches of England and Ireland was to be dissolved, and the Irish Ecclesiastical Courts were to be abolished. There were various and complicated arrangements for the protection of the life interests of those already holding positions in the Irish Church, and for the appropriation of the fund which would return to the possession of the State when all these interests had been fairly considered and dealt with. It must be owned that the Government dealt with vested interests in no niggard spirit. If they erred at all they erred on the side of too much generosity. But they had arrayed against them adversaries so strong that they probably felt it absolutely necessary to buy off some of the opposition by a liberal compensation to all those who were to be deprived of their dignity as clergymen of a State Church. When, however, all had been paid off who could establish any claim, and some perhaps who had in strict fairness no claim whatever, there remained a large fund at the disposal of the Government. This they resolved to set apart for the relief of unavoidable suffering in Ireland. It was not made very clear in the bill itself what the precise purposes were to which the surplus was to be applied, and there was a good deal of disputation afterwards as to the appropriation of the money.

Mr. Gladstone's words, and the words used in the preamble of the bill, were the relief of 'unavoidable calamity and suffering.' Mr. Gladstone spoke of making provision for the blind, the deaf, and the dumb, for reformatories, the training of nurses, and the support of county infirmaries. In a speech delivered at a later stage of the debate, Mr. Bright asked the House whether it would not be better to dispose of the money in such charitable dealing than in continuing to maintain three times the number of clergymen that could be of the slightest use to the Church with which they were connected. 'We can,' he said, 'do but little, it is true. We cannot re-illume the extinguished lamp of reason; we cannot make the deaf to hear; we cannot make the dumb to speak; it is not given to us

> From the thick film to purge the visual ray,
> And on the sightless eyeballs pour the day;

but at least we can lessen the load of affliction, and we can make life more tolerable to vast numbers who suffer.' The sum to be disposed of was very considerable. The gross value of the Irish Church property was estimated at sixteen millions. From this sum would have to be deducted nearly five millions for the vested interests of incumbents; one million seven hundred thousand for compensations to curates and lay compensations; half a million for private endowments; for the Maynooth Grant and the Regium Donum about a million and a quarter. There would be left nearly nine millions for any beneficent purpose on which the Government and the country could

make up their minds. The Maynooth Grant and the Regium Donum were to go with the Irish Church, and the same principle of compensation was to be applied to those who were to be deprived of them. The Regium Donum was an allowance from the Sovereign for the maintenance of Presbyterian ministers in Ireland. It was begun by Charles II. and let drop by James, but was restored by William III. William felt grateful for the support given him by the Presbyterians in Ireland during his contest with James, and indeed had little preference for one form of the Protestant faith over another. William, in the first instance, fixed the grant as a charge upon the customs of Belfast. The Maynooth Grant has been already described in these pages. Both these grants, each a very small thing in itself, now came to an end, and the principle of equality among the religious denominations of Ireland was to be established.

We need not carry the reader through the long course of the debates which took place in the House of Commons. The bill was stoutly resisted by Mr. Disraeli and his party. They resisted it as a whole, and they also fought it in detail. They proposed amendment after amendment in committee, and did all they could to stay its progress as well as to alter some of its arrangements. But there did not seem to be much of genuine earnestness in the speeches made by Mr. Disraeli. The fact that resistance was evidently hopeless had no doubt some effect upon the style of his eloquence. His speeches were amusing rather than impressive. They were full of good points;

they sparkled with happy illustrations and allusions, odd conceits and bewildering paradoxes. But the orator had evidently no faith in the cause he advocated; no faith, that is to say, in the possibility of its success. He must have seen too clearly that the Church as a State establishment in Ireland was doomed, and he had not that intensity of interest in its maintenance which would have made him fight the course, as he had fought many a course before, with all the passionate eloquence of desperation. One of his lieutenants, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, was more effective as a champion of the sinking Irish Church than Mr. Disraeli proved himself to be. Mr. Hardy was a man so constituted as to be only capable of seeing one side of a question at a time. He was filled with the conviction that the Government were attempting an act of spoliation and sacrilege, and he stormed against the meditated crime with a genuine energy which occasionally seemed to supply him with something like eloquence. A peculiar interest attached to the part taken in the debate by Sir Roundell Palmer. It was natural that Sir Roundell Palmer should be with Mr. Gladstone. Everyone expected in the first instance that he would have held high office in the new Administration. He was one of the very foremost lawyers and the best Parliamentary debaters of the day, and the woolsack seemed to be his fitting place. But Sir Roundell Palmer could not conscientiously agree to the disestablishment of the Irish State Church. He was willing to consent to very extensive alterations and

reductions in the Establishment, but he could not go with Mr. Gladstone all the way to the abolition of the Church; and he therefore remained outside the Ministry, and opposed the bill. Some of the debates in the House of Lords were more interesting than those in the Commons. We have already referred to the eloquence and fervour with which Lord Derby opposed the proposition of the Government. Two speeches delivered from the bench where the bishops sit attracted special attention. One may be said to have marked the close, the other the opening, of a career. One was by Dr. Thirlwall, the Bishop of St. David's, the other by Dr. Magee, Bishop of Peterborough. The Bishop of St. David's spoke in favour of the bill, and addressed himself particularly to the demolition of the superstitious sophism which would lead people to believe that the revenues of a purely human institution like the Irish Church were the sacred possession of Heaven, and that to touch them even with the hand of reforming legislation would be an act of sacrilege. Dr. Thirlwall well maintained on this occasion his noble reputation both as an orator and as a man of intellect. Mr. Mill in his 'Autobiography,' has given an interesting account of his first hearing Dr. Thirlwall at one of the public discussions of a society in London some forty years before. 'The speaker with whom I was most struck,' Mr. Mill says, 'was Thirlwall, the historian, since Bishop of St. David's, then a Chancery barrister, unknown except by a high reputation for eloquence acquired at the Cambridge union before the era of

Austin and Macaulay. His speech was in answer to one of mine. Before he had uttered ten sentences, I set him down as the best speaker I had ever heard, and I have never since heard anyone whom I placed above him.' Dr. Magee, on the other hand, was only beginning his career in the House of Lords. He had been but a short time Bishop of Peterborough. He had been raised to the episcopal bench, it was said, chiefly because Mr. Disraeli when in office believed he saw in him the capacity to make a great Parliamentary debater and champion of the political interests of the Church. Dr. Magee delivered a speech of remarkable fluency, energy, and vividness; a speech which might fairly be classed among the best efforts of the leading orators on either side of the controversy. It was more like the speech of a layman than of a prelate; although indeed it recalled in some of its pugnacious passages the recollection of the fighting bishops of the Middle Ages. If the fate of the Irish Church could have been averted or even postponed by impassioned eloquence, the Bishop of Peterborough might alone have done something to stay the stroke of doom. But the fate of the institution was sealed at the moment that Mr. Gladstone returned from the general elections in command of a Liberal majority. The House of Lords were prudent enough not to set themselves against the clear declaration of national opinion. Many amendments were introduced and discussed; and some of these led to a controversy between the two Houses of Parliament; but the controversy ended in compromise. There

were at one time rumours that the Peers would reject or greatly delay the bill, and Mr. Bright wrote an angry letter on the subject addressed to a Birmingham meeting, in which he warned the House of Lords that by throwing themselves athwart the national course they might meet with 'accidents not pleasant for them to think of.' Such a letter coming from a Cabinet Minister created a good deal of amazement, and was made the subject of some sharp discussion in both Houses of Parliament. It was clear that Mr. Bright did not intend to allow his official position to interfere greatly with the emphatic nature of his utterances on public questions. Shocked and scandalised as some of the Peers professed to be, it is not impossible that the letter did some public service by virtue of its very indiscretion. It may have given timely warning to the House of Lords of the dangerous agitation that would arise if they were to set themselves in deliberate opposition to the will of the vast majority of the people. Rumours too were in circulation about the same time of the determination of the Government to create new Peers in such a number as to make the passing of the bill a certainty. Happily, however, it proved that there was no need for any such intervention on the part of the Ministers and the Crown. The time had gone by when the House of Lords cared to exhibit itself as a mere instrument of resistance to the measures of the representative chamber. The most formidable step the Peers took was to carry on the debate on the second reading of the bill until three o'clock in the morning.

The second reading was carried by 179 to 146 votes; and the remainder of the work done by the Lords was only a series of attempts, generally unsuccessful, to obtain here and there a small compromise on some of the less important clauses of the bill. On July 26, 1869, the measure for the disestablishment of the Irish Church received the royal assent.

Meanwhile the wildest excitement prevailed out of doors among the defenders of the State Church. Furious denunciations of the Government resounded from platform and from pulpit. Even in measured and solemn Convocation itself the most impassioned and vehement outcries were heard. One divine spoke of the measure as a great national sin. Another stigmatised it as altogether ungodly, wicked, and abominable. A third called upon the Queen to interfere personally, and exhorted her rather to jeopardise her crown in the effort than leave the Irish Church to be destroyed before her eyes. A great meeting was held in Exeter Hall, at which Mr. Gladstone was stigmatised as 'a traitor to his queen, his country, and his God,' and one reverend gentleman described the Government as 'a cabinet of brigands.' At a meeting held in Ireland a Protestant clergyman reminded the pastors of every Protestant church that, sooner than give their churches up to any apostate system, a barrel of gunpowder and a box of matches would send them flying to the winds of heaven. This was, however, only superfluous fury. No one proposed to turn the Protestant clergymen out of their churches. It is not impossible that the fiery eccle-

siastic who gave this Guy Fawkes advice was himself ministering in a church which had been taken by force from its Catholic owners. The agitation against the bill produced, however, no sensible effect upon the mind of the country at large. It thundered and blazed for a few days or weeks here and there, and then, after occasional grumblings and sputterings, sank into mere silence.

The Irish Church was therefore disestablished, and it was to a certain extent disendowed. Only to a certain extent. As fortunate as Cleopatra, it contrived to retain enough to purchase what it had made known. The time during which the measure was in progress was turned to good account by the authorities of the Establishment. The bill provided that no new interests should be created in the interval between its passing and the actual disestablishment, which was to take place on January 1, 1871. But while the measure was still under discussion some of the rulers of the Church thought it convenient to create as many new interests as possible. New curates entitled to compensation were made with an astonishing rapidity, and the incomes of some of the clergy were increased with liberal hand. Some sharp controversy was afterwards created by the manner in which the period of grace was thus turned to worldly and profitable account, and there can be little doubt that the effect of the policy of disestablishment was deprived of some of its satisfactory influence on the mind of Ireland by the over-liberal opportunities for compensation allowed to vested interests. It would

be impossible, however, not to admit that the difficulties in Mr. Gladstone's way must have warned him that a rigorous dealing with such interests would prove dangerous to the success of his measure. The great fact was that by disestablishing the Irish Church he proclaimed that the policy of religious ascendancy was banished for ever from Ireland, and that the reign of equality had begun.

Lord Derby did not long survive the passing of the measure which he had opposed with such fervour and so much pathetic dignity. His last speech was that which he delivered in the House of Lords against the second reading of the Irish Church Bill on June 17, 1869. 'I am an old man,' he said; 'I have already passed three score years and ten. My official life is entirely closed, my political life is nearly so, and in the course of nature my natural life cannot now be long.' It was sooner ended perhaps than any one expected who heard him deliver that last eloquent protest against a measure of reform which he was unable to resist. He died before the Irish State Church had ceased to live. Doomed as it was, it outlasted its eloquent champion. In the interval between the passing and the practical operation of Mr. Gladstone's bill, on October 23, Lord Derby died at Knowsley, the residence of the Stanleys in Lancashire. His death made no great gap in English politics. He had for some time ceased to assert any really influential place in public affairs. His career had been eminent and distinguished; but its day had long been done. Lord Derby never was a statesman;

he was not even a great leader of a party ; but he was a splendid figure-head for Conservatism in or out of power. He was, on the whole, a superb specimen of the English political nobleman. Proud of soul, but sweet in temper and genial in manner ; dignified as men are who feel instinctively that dignity pertains to them, and therefore never think of how to assert or to maintain it, he was eminently fitted by temperament, by nature, and by fortune for the place it was given him to hold. His parliamentary oratory has already become a tradition. It served its purpose admirably for the time ; it showed, as Macaulay said, that Lord Derby possessed the very instinct of parliamentary debate. It was not weighted with the thought which could have secured it a permanent place in political literature, nor had it the imagination which would have lifted it into an atmosphere above the level of Hansard. In Lord Derby's own day the unanimous opinion of both Houses of Parliament would have given him a place among the very foremost of parliamentary orators. Many competent judges went so far as to set him distinctly above all living rivals. Time has not ratified this judgment. It is impossible that the influence of an orator could have faded so soon if he had really been entitled to the praise which many of his contemporaries would freely have rendered to Lord Derby. The charm of his voice and style, his buoyant readiness, his rushing fluency, his rich profusion of words, his happy knack of illustration, allusion, and retort—all these helped to make men be-

lieve him a much greater orator than he really was. Something, too, was due to the influence of his position. It seemed a sort of condescension on the part of a great noble that he should consent to be an eloquent debater also, and to contend in parliamentary sword-play against professional champions like Peel and O'Connell and Brougham. It must count for something in Lord Derby's fame that, while far inferior to any of these men in political knowledge and in mental capacity, he could compare as an orator with each in turn, and—were it but for his own day, were it but while the magic of his presence and his voice was yet a living influence—could be held by so many to have borne without disadvantage the test of comparison.

When the Irish Church had been disposed of, Mr. Gladstone at once directed his energies to the Irish land system. The State Church had been declared by many to be merely a sentimental grievance. The land system of Ireland, if it was to be accounted a grievance at all, must have been acknowledged to be one of a terribly practical character. Ireland is essentially an agricultural country. It has few manufactures, not many large towns. Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Waterford—these are the only towns that could be called large; below these we come to places that in most other countries would be spoken of as villages or hamlets. The majority of the population of Ireland live on the land and by the land. The condition of the Irish tenantry may be painted effectively in a single touch when it is said that they were tenants-at-will. That fact would of itself be

almost enough to account for the poverty and the misery of the agricultural classes in Ireland. But there were other conditions, too, which tended the same way. The land of Ireland was divided among a comparatively small number of landlords, and the landlords were, as a rule, strangers, the representatives of a title acquired by conquest. Many of them were habitual absentees, who would as soon have thought of living in Ashantee as in Munster or Connaught. An able writer, Mr. James Godkin, in his 'Land War in Ireland,' endeavours to make the condition of Ireland clear to English readers by asking them to consider what England would be under similar circumstances. 'Imagine,' he says, 'that in consequence of rebellions' (against the Normans) 'the land of England had been confiscated three or four times, after desolating wars and famines, so that all the native proprietors were expelled, and the land was parcelled out to French soldiers and adventurers, on condition that the foreign planters should assist in keeping down the 'mere English' by force of arms. Imagine that the English, being crushed by a cruel penal code for a century, were allowed to reoccupy the soil as mere tenants-at-will, under the absolute power of their French landlords. If all this be imagined by English legislators and English writers, they will be better able to understand the Irish land question, and to comprehend the nature of 'Irish difficulties' as well as the justice of feeble, insincere, and baffled statesmen in casting the blame of Irish misery and disorder on the unruly and barbarous nature of

Irishmen.' In truth, the Irish agricultural population turned out exactly as any other race of human beings would have done under similar conditions. They held the land which was their only means of living at the mercy of the landlord or his agent. They had no interest in being industrious and improving their land. If they improved the patch of soil they worked on, their rent was almost certain to be raised, or they were turned out of the land without receiving a farthing of compensation for their improvements. Of course there were many excellent landlords, humane and kindly men—men, too, who saw the wisdom of being humane and kind. But in the majority of cases the landlords and the agents held firmly by what seemed to them the right of property—the right to get as high a price for a piece of land as it would fetch in open competition. The demand for land was so great, the need of land was so vital, that men would offer any price for it. Men would offer prices which they must have known they could never pay, which they must have known the land would never enable them to pay. Offering land for hire in Ireland was like offering money on loan to needy spendthrifts; any terms would be snatched at by the desperate borrower to-day, no matter what was to happen to-morrow. When the tenant had got hold of his piece of land, he had no idea of cultivating it to the best of his strength and opportunities. Why should he? The moment his holding began to show a better appearance, that moment he might look to having his rent raised, or to being turned out in favour of

some competitor who offered higher terms for occupation. Why should he improve? Whenever he was turned out of the land he would have to leave his improvements for the benefit of the landlord or the new comer. He was, therefore, content to scratch the soil instead of really cultivating it. He extracted all he could from it in his short day. He lived from hand to mouth, from hour to hour. The whole system of feudal tenure of land under a master was new to Ireland. It began with Ireland's conquest, and it was identified in the mind of the Irish peasant with Ireland's degradation. Everything was there that could make oppression bitter. The landlord began to be looked upon at last as the tenant's natural enemy. Ribbon societies were formed for the protection of the tenant. The protection afforded was only too often that of terrorism and assassination. The ribbonism of the south and west of Ireland was as strictly the product of the land system of the country as the trades-union outrages in England were the offspring of the unequal and unjust legislation that gave all the power to the master and lent no protection to the workman. All the while five out of every six English writers and political speakers were discoursing gravely on the incurable idleness and lawlessness of the Celtic race and the Irish peasant. The law gave the Irish tenant no security for the fruit of his labour, and Englishmen wondered that he was not laborious. The law told him that when he had sown he should not be entitled to reap, and Englishmen were angry that he would not persist in

sowing. Imperial legislation showed itself his steadfast enemy, and Englishmen marvelled at his want of respect for the law.

In one province of Ireland indeed a better condition of things existed. Over the greater part of Ulster the tenant-right system prevailed. This system was a custom merely, but it had gradually come to acquire something like the force of law. The principle of tenant-right was that a man should be allowed to remain in undisturbed possession of his holding as long as he paid his rent; that he should be entitled, on giving up the land, to compensation for unexhausted improvements, and that he should be at liberty to sell the 'good-will' of his farm for what it would fetch in the market. The tenant was free to do what a man who has a long lease of any holding may do; he might sell to any bidder of whom his landlord approved the right to enter on the occupancy of the place. Wherever this tenant-right principle prevailed there was industry, there was prosperity; where it did not prevail was the domain of poverty, idleness, discontent, and crime. The one demand of the Irish agricultural population everywhere was for some form of fixity of tenure. Let it be sought by legalising the Ulster custom everywhere, or by declaring that men should hold their land as long as they paid a fair rent, to be fixed by authorised and impartial valuation, or by some plan of establishing a peasant proprietary—let the demand be made as it would, there was substantially one demand and one only—security of tenure. The demand was neg-

lected or refused by generations of English statesmen, chiefly because no statesman would take the trouble to distinguish between words and things ; between shadowy, pedantic theories and clear, substantial facts. 'Tenant-right,' said Lord Palmerston, amid the cheers of an assembly mainly composed of landlords, 'is landlords' wrong.' Lord Palmerston forgot that the landlord, like every one else in the commonwealth, holds even his dearest rights of property subject to the condition that his assertion of them is not inconsistent with the general weal. The landlord holds his land as the shipowner holds his ship and the railway company its lines of rail ; subject to the right of the State to see that the duties of possession are properly fulfilled, and that the ownership is not allowed to become a public danger and a nuisance. Land is, from its very nature, from the fact that it cannot be increased in extent, and that the possession by one man is the exclusion of another—land is the form of property over which the State would most naturally be expected to reserve a right of ultimate control. Yet English statesmen for generations complacently asserted the impossibility of any legislative interference with the right of the landlord, as if legislation had not again and again interfered with the right of the factory owner, the owner of mines, the possessor of railway shares, the shopkeeper ; the right of the master over his apprentice, the mistress in the hire of her maid-of-all-work. Long years before Lord Palmerston talked so decisively of the landlord's right, a man

of far more truly Conservative mind than Lord Palmerston had defined in a few sentences the limits of private or corporate rights. In his speech on Fox's East India measure Burke frankly met this difficulty about individual and corporate rights. He was speaking for the moment especially of chartered corporations; but of course a single owner of property can claim no greater right than a company of property-owners. 'It has been said, if you violate this charter, what security has the charter of the bank, in which public credit is so deeply concerned, and even the charter of London, in which the rights of so many subjects are involved? I answer: in the like case they have no security at all; no, no security at all. If the bank should, by every species of mismanagement, fall into a state similar to that of the East India Company, if it should be oppressed with demands it could not answer, engagements which it could not perform, and with bills for which it could not procure payment, no charter should protect such mismanagement from correction, and such public grievances from redress. If the City of London had the means and will of destroying an empire, and of cruelly oppressing and tyrannising over millions of men as good as themselves, the charter of the City of London would prove no sanction to such tyranny and such oppression. Charters are kept when their purposes are maintained; they are violated when the privilege is supported against its end and its object.' If ever there was a creature of law and of authority acting in the place of law, it was the landlordism of

Ireland. It was a plantation made by the orders of English sovereigns and governments. It was not a growth of the soil; it was strictly an exotic It was imposed upon the country and the people. It could not plead in support of any of its alleged rights even that prescriptive title which grows up with the growth of an institution that has held its place during all the ages to which tradition or memory goes back. The landlordism of Ireland was, compared with most European institutions, a thing of the day before yesterday. It was the creation of conquest, the impost of confiscation. It could plead no title whatever to maintain an unlimited right of action in opposition to the welfare of the people on whom it was forced. At least it could claim no such title when once the time had passed away which insisted that the right of conquest superseded all other human rights, that the tenant, like the slave, had no rights which his master was bound to respect, and that the common weal meant simply the interests and the privileges of the ruling class. The moment the title of the Irish land system came to be fairly examined, it was seen to be full of flaws. It was dependent on conditions that had never been fulfilled. It had not even made the landlord class prosperous. It had not even succeeded, as no doubt some of its founders intended that it should succeed, in colonising the island with English and Scotch settlers. When the famine of 1846 and 1847 had tried the whole system with its gaunt, stern hand, legislation had perforce to interfere with the fancied rights of land-

lordism, and invent a new judicial machinery for taking from the broken-down owner what he could keep no longer with profit to himself or the country. For generations the land tenure system of Ireland had been the subject of parliamentary debate and parliamentary inquiry. The Devon commission had made ample investigation of its principles and its operation. Mr. Sharman Crawford had in vain devoted an honest life to the advocacy of tenant-right. Mr. Cardwell, Mr. Chichester Fortescue, Lord Naas had introduced measures trying more or less feebly to deal with Irish land tenure. Nothing came of all this. The supposed right of the landlord stopped the way. The one simple demand of the occasion was, as we have shown, security of tenure, and it was an article of faith with English statesmanship until Mr. Gladstone's time that security for the tenant was confiscation for the landlord.

Mr. Gladstone came into power full of genuine reforming energy and without the slightest faith in the economic wisdom of our ancestors. In a speech delivered by him during his electioneering campaign in Lancashire, he had declared that the Irish upas-tree had three great branches : the State Church, the Land Tenure System, and the System of Education, and that he meant to hew them all down if he could. His figure of speech met with a good deal of contemptuous literary criticism ; but it expressed a very resolute purpose. On February 15, 1870, Mr. Gladstone introduced his Irish Land Bill into the House of Commons. The measure was one of far greater importance

as regarded its principles than it proved to be in its practical operation. In plain words, what it did was to recognise the fact that the whole system of land tenure in Ireland, so far as it was the creature of law, was based upon a wrong principle. Mr. Gladstone's measure overthrew once for all the doctrine of the landlord's absolute and unlimited right. It recognised a certain property or partnership of the tenant in the land which he tilled. Mr. Gladstone took the Ulster tenant-right as he found it, and made it a legal institution. In places where the Ulster practice, or something analogous to it, did not exist, he threw upon the landlord the burden of proof as regarded the right of eviction. The tenant disturbed in the possession of his land could claim compensation for improvements, and the bill reversed the existing assumption of the law by presuming all improvements to be the property of the tenant, and leaving it to the landlord, if he could, to prove the contrary. The bill established a special judicial machinery for carrying out its provisions. It allowed the tribunals thus instituted to take into consideration not merely the strict legal conditions of each case, but also any circumstances that might affect the claim of the tenant as a matter of equity. Mr. Gladstone's great object was to bring about a state of things by virtue of which a tenant should not be dispossessed of his holding so long as he continued to pay his rent, and should in any case be entitled to full compensation for any substantial improvements which his energy or his capital might have effected.

The bill met on the whole with a cordial reception from the Irish members of Parliament, although some of its clauses were regarded with a doubt and disfavour which subsequent events, we believe, showed to be well-founded. Mr. Gladstone allowed landlords, under certain conditions, to contract themselves out of the provisions of the bill, and these conditions were so largely availed of in some parts of Ireland, that there were more evictions after the bill had become law than before it had yet been thought of. On this ground the measure was actually opposed by a small number of the popular representatives of Ireland. The general opinion, however, then and since was, that the bill was of inestimable value to Ireland in the mere fact that it completely upset the fundamental principle on which legislation had always previously dealt with Irish land tenure. It recognised a certain ownership on the part of the tenant as well as that of the landlord. The new principle thus introduced might well be denounced as revolutionary by certain startled Irish landlords. It put an end to the reign of the landlord's absolute power; it reduced the landlord to the level of every other proprietor, of every other man in the country who had anything to sell or to hire. It recognised the palpable fact that there are certain conditions which make the ownership of land a more responsible possession than the ownership of property which admits of limitless expansion. The existing system of legislation had been founded not merely on injustice but on untruth. It had denied the presence of conditions which were as certain and as palpable as the substance of the land

itself. Therefore the new legislation might in one sense have well been called revolutionary. It decided once for all against Lord Palmerston's famous dogma, and declared that tenant-right was not landlord's wrong. That was in itself a revolution.

The bill passed without substantial alteration. The Conservatives as a party did not vote against the second reading. A division was forced on, but only eleven members voted against the motion that the bill be read a second time, and of these only two or three belonged to the Conservative party, and only one, Mr. Henley, was of any mark among Conservatives. The small minority was chiefly made up of Irish members, who thought the bill inefficient and unsatisfactory. Long discussions in committee followed, but the only serious attempt made to interfere with the actual principle of the measure, an attempt embodied in an amendment moved by Mr. Disraeli, was defeated by a majority of more than seventy votes. The bill was read a third time in the Commons on May 30. A debate of three nights took place in the House of Lords on the motion for the second reading, and many nights of discussion were occupied in committee. On August 1, 1870, the bill received the royal assent. The second branch of the upas-tree had been hewn down; but the woodman's axe had yet to be laid to a branch of tougher fibre, well calculated to turn the edge of even the best weapon, and to jar the strongest arm that wielded it. Mr. Gladstone had dealt with Church and land; he had yet to deal with university education. He had gone with Irish ideas thus far.

CHAPTER LIX.

'REFORMATION IN A FLOOD.'

On June 10, 1870, men's minds were suddenly turned away from thought of political controversy, by a melancholy announcement in the morning papers. The Irish Land Bill, the question of national education, the curiously ominous look of affairs in France, where the Emperor had just been obtaining by means of the *plebiscite* 'a new guarantee of order and liberty;' the terrible story of the capture and massacre of young English tourists by Greek brigands in the neighbourhood of Marathon; these and many other exciting topics were forgotten for the hour, and the thoughts of millions were suddenly drawn away to a country house near the Gad's Hill of Shakespere, on the road to Rochester, where the most popular author of his day was lying dead. On the evening of June 8, Mr. Dickens became suddenly seized with paralysis. He fell into an unconscious state and continued so until his death, the evening after. The news was sent over the country on the 10th, and brought a pang as of personal sorrow into almost every home. Dickens was not of an age to die; he had scarcely passed his prime. Born early in February 1812, he had not gone far into his fifty-ninth year. In another part of this work an attempt

has been made to do justice to Dickens as a novelist; here it is only necessary to record the historical fact of his death and of the deep impression that it made. No author of our time came near him in popularity; perhaps no English author ever was so popular during his own life. To an immense number of men and women in these countries, Dickens stood for literature; to not a few his cheery teaching was sufficient as philosophy and even as religion. Soon after his death, as might have been expected, a certain reaction took place, and for a while it became the fashion to smile quietly at Dickens's teaching and his influence. That mood too will have its day and will pass. It may be safely predicted that Dickens will be found to have made a firm place in English literature, although that place will probably not be so high as his admirers would once have claimed for him. Londoners were familiar with Dickens's personal appearance as well as with his writings, and certain London streets did not seem quite the same when his striking face and energetic movements could be seen there no more. It is likely that Dickens overworked his exuberant vital energy, his superb resources of physical health and animal spirits. In work and play, in writing and in exercising, he was unsparing of his powers. Like the lavish youth with the full purse in 'Gil Blas,' he appeared to believe that his stock could never be spent. Men who were early companions of his, and who had not half his vital power, outlived him many years. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, although his own desire was to be laid quietly in Rochester

churchyard. It was held that the national cemetery claimed him. We cannot help thinking it a pity the claim was made. All true admirers of Scott must be glad that he rests in his dear and congenial Dryburgh; most of the admirers of Dickens would have been better pleased to think that he lay beneath the green turf of the ancient churchyard, in venerable and storied Rochester, amid the scenes that he loved and taught so many others to love.

Nothing in modern English history is like the rush of the extraordinary years of reforming energy on which the new Administration had now entered. Mr. Gladstone's Government had to grapple with five or six great questions of reform, any one of which might have seemed enough to engage the whole attention of an ordinary Administration. The new Prime Minister had pledged himself to abolish the State Church in Ireland and to reform the Irish Land Tenure system. He had made up his mind to put an end to the purchase of commissions in the army. Recent events and experiences had convinced him that it was necessary to introduce the system of voting by ballot. He accepted for his Government the responsibility of originating a complete scheme of National Education. Meanwhile, there were many questions of the highest importance in foreign policy waiting for solution. The American Government did what every cool and well-informed observer must have known they would do; they pressed for a settlement of the claims arising out of the damage done by the *Alabama* and other Southern cruisers which had been

built in English dockyards and had sailed from English ports. In the mid career of the Government the war broke out between France and Prussia. Russia took advantage of the opportunity to insist that the Treaty of Paris must be altered by the cancelling of the clause which 'formally and in perpetuity' refused to every Power the right of having a fleet in the Black Sea. Each of these questions was of capital importance; each might have involved the country in war. It required no common energy and strength of character to keep closely to the work of domestic reform, amid such exciting discussions in foreign policy all the while, and with the war-trumpet ringing for a long time in the ears of England.

Mr. Forster's Education Bill may be said to have been run side by side with the Irish Land Bill. The Government undertook a great and a much-needed work when it set about establishing a national system of elementary education. The manner in which England had neglected the education of her poor children had long been a reproach to her civilisation. She was behind every other great country in the world; she was behind most countries that in nowise professed to be great. Prussia and nearly all the German countries were centuries in advance of her; so were some, if not actually all, of the American States. We have already shown in these pages, by what pitiful patchwork of compromises and make-shift expedients England had been trying to put together something like a plan for the instruction of the children of the poor. Private charity was eked out in a parsimonious

and miserable manner by a scanty dole from the State; and as a matter of course, where the direst poverty prevailed, and naturally brought the extremest need for assistance to education, there the wants of the place were least efficiently supplied. For years the statesmanship of England had been kept from any serious attempt to grapple with the evil by the doctrine that popular education ought not to be the business of a Government. The idea prevailed that education conducted by the State would be something un-English; something which might do very well for Germans and Americans and other such people, but which was entirely unsuited to the manly independence of the true Briton. It therefore came about that more than two-thirds of the children of the country were absolutely without instruction. One of the first great tasks which Mr. Gladstone's Government undertook, was to reform this condition of things, and to provide England for the first time in her history with a system of National Education. On February 17, 1870, Mr. Forster introduced a bill, having for its object to provide for public elementary education in England and Wales. The basis of the measure was very simple, but also very comprehensive. Mr. Forster proposed to establish a system of School Boards in England and Wales; and to give to each board the power to frame bye-laws compelling the attendance of all children, from five to twelve years of age, within the school district. The Government did not see their way to a system of direct and universal compulsion. They therefore fell back on a compromise, by

leaving the power to compel in the hands of the local authorities. Existing schools were, in many instances, to be adopted by the bill, and to receive Government aid, on condition that they possessed a certain amount of efficiency in education, that they submitted themselves to the examination of an undenominational inspector, and that they admitted a conscience clause as part of their regulations. The funds were to be procured, partly by local rate, partly by grants from the Treasury, and partly by the fees paid in the paying schools. There were of course to be free schools provided, where the poverty of the population was such as, in the opinion of the local authorities, to render gratuitous instruction indispensable.

The bill at first was favourably received. But the general harmony of opinion did not last long. The task proved to be one of the most difficult that the Government could have undertaken. The whole body of the English and Welsh Nonconformists soon declared themselves in strong hostility to some of the bill's provisions. Mr. Forster found, when he came to examine into the condition of the machinery of education in England, that there was already a system of schools existing under the charge of religious bodies of various kinds : the State Church, and the Roman Catholic Church, and other authorities. These he proposed to adopt as far as possible into his scheme ; to affiliate them, as it were, to the Governmental system of education. But he had to make some concession to the religious principles on which such schools were founded. He could not by any stroke

of authority undertake to change them all into secular schools. He therefore proposed to meet the difficulty by adopting regulations compelling every school of this kind which obtained Government aid or recognition to accept a conscience clause by means of which the religious convictions of parents and children should be scrupulously regarded in the instruction given during the regular school hours. On this point the Noncomformists as a body broke away from the Government. They laid down the broad principle that no State aid whatever should be given to any schools but those which were conducted on strictly secular and undenominational principles. It ought to be superfluous to say that the Nonconformists did not object to the religious instruction of children. It ought not to be supposed for a moment that they attached less importance to religious instruction than any other body of persons. Their principle was that public money, the contribution of citizens of all shades of belief, ought only to be given for such teaching as the common opinion of the country was agreed upon. The contribution of the Jew, they argued, ought not to be exacted in order to teach Christianity ; the Protestant ratepayer ought not to be compelled to pay for the instruction of Roman Catholic children in the tenets of their faith ; the Irish Catholic in London or Birmingham ought not to be called upon to pay in any way for the teaching of distinctively Protestant doctrine.

Therefore, they said, let us at any cost establish a strictly national and secular system in our public ele-

mentary schools ; let us teach there what we are all agreed upon ; and let us leave the duty of teaching religion to the ministers of religion, and to the parents of the children. About the truths of arithmetic and geography, about spelling and writing, we are all agreed ; let our common contributions be given to common instruction, and let each denomination provide in its own way for the religious training of its young people. This way of looking at the question left out of notice one most important element in the controversy : the existence of large bodies of citizens who conscientiously objected to any school teaching which was divorced from religious instruction, and who did not believe that there could be any education in the true sense without the influence of religion accompanying and inspiring it. We shall not here discuss the relative worth of these two opposing and irreconcileable theories of public education. The fact that they existed, made it well-nigh impossible for the Government to satisfy the demands of the Nonconformists. Mr. Forster could not admit the principle for which they contended. He could not say that it would be a fair and equal plan to offer secular education, and that alone, to all bodies of the community ; for he was well aware that there were such bodies who were conscientiously opposed to what was called secular education, and who could not agree to accept it. He therefore acknowledged existing and very palpable facts, and endeavoured to establish a system which should satisfy the consciences of all the denominations. But the Nonconformists would not meet him on this ground.

They set up their shibboleth of undenominational education; they made a fetish of their theory of State aid; and they fought Mr. Forster long and ably and bitterly. The Liberal minister was compelled to accept more than once the aid of the Conservative party; for that party as a whole adopted the principle which insisted on religious instruction in every system of national education. It more than once happened therefore, that Mr. Forster and Mr. Gladstone found themselves appealing to the help of Conservatives and of Roman Catholics against that dissenting body of Englishmen who were usually the main support of the Liberal party. It happened too, very unfortunately, that at this time Mr. Bright's health had so far given way as to compel him to seek complete rest from Parliamentary duties. His presence and his influence with the Nonconformists might perhaps have tended to moderate their course of action, and to reconcile them to the policy of the Government even on the subject of national education; but his voice was silent then, and for long after. The split between the Government and the Nonconformists became something like a complete severance. Many angry and bitter words were spoken in the House of Commons on both sides. On one occasion, there was an almost absolute declaration on the part of Mr. Gladstone and of Mr. Miall, a leading Nonconformist, that they had parted company for ever. The Education Bill was nevertheless a great success. The School Boards became really valuable and powerful institutions, and the principle of the cumulative vote was tested for the first time in

their elections. When School Boards were first established in the great cities, their novelty and the evident importance of the work they had to do, attracted to them some of the men of most commanding intellect and position. The London School Board had as its chairman, for instance, Lord Lawrence, the great Indian statesman, lately a Viceroy, and for one of its leading members Professor Huxley. An important peculiarity of the School Boards too, was the fact, that they admitted women to the privileges of membership; and this admission was largely availed of. Women voted, proposed amendments, sat on committees, and in every way took their part of the duties of citizenship in the business of national education. When the novelty of the system wore off, some of the more eminent men gradually fell out of the work, but the School Boards never failed to maintain a high and useful standard of membership. They began and continued to be strictly representative institutions. From the peer to the working man, from Evangelical Churchman to Catholic; from Nonconformist to Rationalist; from old-fashioned middle-class Paterfamilias to eager young woman shrilly representing the rights of her sex, they became a mirror of English public and business life. Most of their work even still remains to be done. The school system of the country needs many improvements and many relaxations, probably, before it can be pronounced to be in fair working order. Its existence has in many parts of England brought thus far not peace but a sword. The struggle between the conscientious belief of one class of persons, and the

political dogma of another, is still going on. Many attempts were made to induce the Government to go as far as direct compulsory education, and much dissatisfaction was expressed at the refusal of ministers to venture on the adoption of such a principle. It is therefore not unreasonable to say that the national system of education has hardly yet had a fair and full trial. But so far as it has gone, there can be no doubt of the success it has achieved. No man exists who would, if he could, see England return to the condition of things which prevailed before the days of the Gladstone administration. But it must be owned that the Gladstone administration was weakened and not strengthened by its education scheme. One of the first symptoms of coming danger to Mr. Gladstone's Government was found in the estrangement of the English Nonconformists. They clung to their adopted principle with a genuine Puritan pertinacity. They admitted no respect of persons where that was concerned. Honest, conscientious and narrow, they were ready to sacrifice any party and any minister, rather than tolerate concession or compromise.

The Government were a little unfortunate too as regarded another great reform; that of the organisation of the army. Mr. Cardwell, the War Minister, brought forward a scheme for the reconstruction of the army, by combining under one system of discipline the regular troops, the militia, the volunteers, and the reserve. One most important part of the scheme was, the abolition of the purchase system for officers' com-

missions, and the substitution of promotion according to merit. Except in certain regiments, and in certain branches of the service outside England itself, the rule was, that an officer obtained his commission by purchase. Promotion was got in the same way. An officer bought a step up in the service. A commission was a vested interest; a personal property. The owner had paid so much for it, and he expected to get so much for it when he thought fit to sell it. The regulation price recognised by law and the Horse Guards was not by any means the actual price of the commission. It became worth much more to the holder, and of course he expected to get its real price, not its regulation, or nominal and imaginary price. The regulation price was to the real price what the cost of the ticket bought at the door of an Italian theatre is to the sum which has to be paid inside for a seat from which to see the play. This anomalous and extraordinary system had grown up with the growth of the English army, until it seemed in the eyes of many an essential condition of the army's existence. It found defenders almost everywhere. Because the natural courage, energy and fighting power of Englishmen, Irishmen and Scotchmen had made a good army in spite of this unlucky practice, because the army did not actually collapse or wither away under its influence, many men were convinced that the army could not get on without it. The abolition of the purchase system had been advocated by generations of reformers without much success. For years, a stout old soldier, Sir De Lacy Evans, had

made an annual motion on the subject which was regarded by not a few as merely one of the necessary bores of Parliamentary life. More lately Mr. Trevelyan had taken up the cause with vivacity, spirit, and good effect. Lord Stanley had always supported the proposed reform, as he had supported the system of open competition for appointments in the Civil Service. But the question did not become really pressing and practical until Mr. Gladstone, on his accession to power, resolved to include it in his list of reforms. Of course Mr. Cardwell's proposition was bitterly and pertinaciously opposed. The principle of army purchase was part of a system in which large numbers of the most influential class had a vested interest. It was part of the aristocratic principle. To admit men to commissions in the army by pure merit and by mere competition would be to deprive the service of its specially aristocratic character. Few of those who opposed the reform on this ground were actually conscious that they were fighting merely for the maintenance of a class privilege and a selfish advantage. They had schooled themselves into the conviction that the aristocratic system was the only principle of existence for an English army; that a system of open promotion by merit would be too French or too American, or something of the kind; that it would fill the higher places in the service with persons of no rank and of vulgar habits; and they had worked themselves into the belief that in resisting Mr. Cardwell's measure they were performing a patriotic duty. A large number of the Conservative

party set themselves, therefore, not merely to oppose but to obstruct the bill. They proposed all manner of amendments, and raised all manner of discussions, in which the same arguments were repeated over and over again by the same speakers in almost the same words. Men who had never before displayed the slightest interest in the saving of the public money, were now clamorous opponents of the bill on the ground that the abolition of purchase would render necessary the outlay of a large sum for compensation to officers thus deprived of their vested interests. This outlay the Liberal Government, usually censured by their opponents on the ground of their pinching parsimony, were quite willing to meet. Mr. Cardwell was prepared to make provision for it. Economy, however, became suddenly a weapon in the hands of some of the Conservatives. The session was going on, and there seemed little prospect of the Opposition being discouraged or slackening in their energy. The Government began to see that it would be impossible to carry through the vast and complicated scheme of army reorganisation which they had introduced; and Mr. Gladstone was resolved that the system of purchase must come to an end. It was thought expedient at last, and while the bill was still fighting its way through committee, to abandon a great part of the measure and persevere for the present only with those clauses which related to the abolition of the system of purchase. Under these conditions the bill passed its third reading in the Commons on July 3, 1871, not without a stout resistance at the last and

not by a very overwhelming majority. This condition of things gave the majority in the House of Lords courage to oppose the scheme. A meeting of Conservative peers was held, and it was resolved that the Duke of Richmond should offer an amendment to the motion for the second reading of the army purchase bill. The Duke of Richmond was exactly the sort of man that a party under such conditions would agree upon as the proper person to move an amendment. He was an entirely respectable and safe politician; a man of great influence so far as dignity and territorial position were concerned; a seemingly moderate Tory who showed nothing openly of the mere partisan and yet was always ready to serve his party. When the motion for the second reading came on, the Duke of Richmond moved an amendment declaring that the House of Lords was unwilling to agree to the motion until a comprehensive and complete scheme of army reorganisation should have been laid before it. This amendment was cleverly constructed. It did not pledge the House of Lords to reject the bill; it did not directly oppose the second reading; it merely said that before passing the second reading, the House was anxious to know more fully the plans of the Government for the general reorganisation of the army. The Government had brought in a scheme of vast reorganisation, and had then withdrawn nearly all of it, with the avowed intention of introducing it again at a more convenient opportunity. It looked reasonable enough therefore that the House of Lords should hesitate about abandoning the system of pur-

chase before knowing exactly what the Government proposed to do as a supplement and consequence of so important a measure. But of course the object of the House of Lords was not to obtain further information; it was simply to get rid of the bill for the present. The amendment of the Duke of Richmond was adopted.

Then Mr. Gladstone took a course which became the subject of keen and embittered controversy. Purchase in the army was permitted only by Royal warrant. The whole system was the creation of Royal regulation. The House of Commons had pronounced against the system. The House of Lords had not pronounced in favour of it. The House of Lords had not rejected the measure of the Government, but only expressed a wish for delay and for further information. Delay however would have been fatal to the measure for that session. Mr. Gladstone therefore devised a way for checkmating what he knew to be the design of the House of Lords. It was an ingenious plan ; it was almost an audacious plan ; it took the listener's breath away to hear of it. Mr. Gladstone announced that as the system of purchase was the creation of Royal regulation, he had advised the Queen to take the decisive step of cancelling the Royal warrant which made purchase legal. A new Royal warrant was therefore immediately issued, declaring that, on and after November 1 following, all regulations made by Her Majesty or any of her predecessors regulating or fixing the prices at which commissions might be bought or in any way authorising the pur-

chase or sale of such commissions should be cancelled. As far as regarded purchase therefore, the controversy came suddenly to an end. The House of Lords had practically nothing to discuss. All that was left of the Government scheme on which the Peers could have anything to say was that part of the bill which provided compensation for those whom the abolition of the system of purchase would deprive of certain vested interests. For the Lords to reject the bill as it now stood would merely be to say that such officers should have no compensation. The Lords were, to use a homely expression, sold. To adopt a phrase which would have been good English once, and would not have been too strong to illustrate their own views of what had happened, they were 'bubbled.' Astonishment fell upon the minds of most who heard Mr. Gladstone's determination. After a moment of bewilderment it was received with a wild outburst of Liberal exultation. It was felt to be a splendid party triumph. The House of Lords had been completely foiled. The tables had been turned on the Peers. They were as utterly baffled as Sir Giles Overreach in Massinger's play, when pulling out the document on which he is to rely, he finds it only 'a fair skin of parchment,' with 'neither wax nor words.' 'What prodigy is this? I am o'erwhelmed with wonder,' an astounded peer might have exclaimed; 'what subtle spirit hath razed out the inscription?' Nothing was left for the House of Lords but to pass the bill as quickly as possible, coupling its passing, however, with a resolution announcing that it was passed only in order to secure

to officers of the army the compensation they were entitled to receive, and censuring the Government for having attained, 'by the exercise of the prerogative and without the aid of Parliament,' the principal object which they contemplated in the bill.

The House of Lords was then completely defeated. The system of purchase in the army was abolished by one sudden and clever stroke. The Government were victorious over their opponents. Yet the hearts of many sincere Liberals sank within them as they heard the announcement of the triumph. Mr. Disraeli condemned in the strongest terms the sudden exercise of the prerogative of the Crown to help the Ministry out of a difficulty; and many a man of mark and influence on the Liberal benches felt that there was good ground for the strictures of the leader of the Opposition. Mr. Fawcett in particular condemned the act of the Government. He insisted that if it had been done by a Tory minister it would have been passionately denounced by Mr. Gladstone amid the plaudits of the whole Liberal party. Mr. Fawcett was a man who occupied a remarkable position in the House of Commons. In his early manhood he met with an accident which entirely destroyed the sight of his eyes. He made the noble resolve that he would nevertheless follow unflinchingly the career he had previously mapped out for himself, and would not allow the terrible calamity he had suffered to drive him from the active life of the political world. His tastes were for politics and political economy. He published a manual of political economy; he wrote largely on the

subject in reviews and magazines ; he was elected Professor of the science in his own university, Cambridge. He was in politics as well as in economics a pupil of Mr. Mill ; and with the encouragement and support of Mr. Mill he became a candidate for a seat in Parliament. He was a Liberal of the most decided tone ; but he was determined to hold himself independent of party. He stood for Southwark against Mr. Layard in 1857, and was defeated ; he contested Cambridge and Brighton at subsequent elections, and at last in 1865 he was successful at Brighton. He was not long in the House of Commons before it was acknowledged that his political career was likely to be something of a new force in Parliament. A remarkably powerful reasoner, he was capable notwithstanding his infirmity of making a long speech full of figures and of statistical calculations. His memory was fortunately so quick and powerful as to enable him easily to dispense with all the appliances which even well-trained speakers commonly have to depend upon when they enter into statistical controversy. In Parliament he held faithfully to the purpose with which he had entered it, and was a thorough Liberal in principles, but absolutely independent of the expedients and sometimes of the mere discipline of party. If he believed that the Liberal ministers were going wrong, he censured them as freely as though they were his political opponents. On this occasion he felt strongly about the course Mr. Gladstone had taken, and he expressed himself in language of unmeasured condemnation. It seems hard to under-

stand how any independent man could have come to any other conclusion. The exercise of the Royal prerogative was undoubtedly legal. Much time was wasted in testifying to its legality. The question in dispute was whether its sudden introduction in such a manner was a proper act on the part of the Government; whether it was right to cut short by virtue of the Queen's prerogative a debate which had previously been carried on without the slightest intimation that the controversy was to be settled in any other way than that of the ordinary Parliamentary procedure. There seems to be only one reasonable answer to this question. The course taken by Mr. Gladstone was unusual, unexpected, unsustained by any precedent; it was a mere surprise; it was not fair to the House of Lords; it was not worthy of the occasion, or the ministry, or the Liberal principles they professed. Great stress was laid upon an opinion which was obtained from Sir Roundell Palmer in justification of the action of the Government. But Sir Roundell Palmer merely gave it as his opinion that the issuing of the warrant cancelling purchase was within the constitutional power of the Crown. On that subject there could be no reasonable doubt. But that was not the question which people were discussing so eagerly. They were asking whether it was fair to begin a measure of reform on the ordinary principles of Parliamentary procedure, and suddenly to bring it to a close by the unexpected intervention of the Royal prerogative. On this question, the only one really at issue, Sir Roundell Palmer's letter was a condemnation, not a justification,

of the course taken by the Government. 'I should have been glad,' Sir Roundell Palmer wrote to Mr. Cardwell, 'if it had been generally and clearly understood from the beginning that, subject to the sense of Parliament being ascertained with reference to the point of compensation, the form of procedure would be that which was eventually adopted, because it is certainly an evil that the adoption of one constitutional mode of procedure rather than another should appear to arise from an adverse vote of the House of Lords.'

The introduction of the prerogative in this curious way did much to damage the influence of Mr. Gladstone's Government. Everyone in the end came to approve of the principle of promotion in the army by merit, and the abolition of the anomalous system of purchase. But this great reform could at most have been delayed for only a single session by the House of Lords. It would have been carried, as the ballot was carried, the moment it was sent up a second time from the representative chamber. It is not even certain that the House of Lords, if firmly met, would have carried their opposition long enough to delay the measure by a single session. In any case the time lost would not have counted for much; better by far to have waited another session than to have carried the point at once by a stroke of policy which seemed impatient, petulant, and even unfair. It is evident that among the independent men of his own party, Mr. Gladstone suffered discredit by the manner in which he swept the purchase system away, and 'bade his will avouch it.' Among the many influences

already combining to weaken his authority, the impression produced by this stroke of policy was not the least powerful.

The Ballot Bill was not carried without a struggle. It was introduced by Mr. Forster on February 20, 1871, and was a measure embodying some remarkable changes. Its principal object was of course the introduction of the system of secret voting. This Mr. Forster proposed to do by compelling each voter to use only an official voting-paper which he was to obtain at the polling-place and there alone. Entering the polling-place, the voter was to go to the official in charge, and mention his name and his place of residence. The official, having ascertained that he was properly on the register, would hand him a stamped paper on which to inscribe his vote. The voter was to take the paper into a separate compartment and there privately mark a cross opposite the printed name of the candidate for whom he desired to record his vote. He was then to fold up the paper in such a manner as to prevent the mark from being seen, and in the presence of the official, drop it into the urn for containing the votes. By this plan Mr. Forster proposed not only to obtain secrecy but also to prevent personation. The Bill likewise undertook to abolish the old practice of nominating candidates publicly by speeches at the hustings. Instead of a public nomination it was intended that the candidates should be nominated by means of a paper containing the names of a proposer and seconder and eight assentors, all of whom must be registered voters. This paper being

handed to the returning officer would constitute a nomination. Thus was abolished one of the most characteristic and time-dishonoured peculiarities of electioneering. Every humorous writer, every satirist with pencil or pen, from Hogarth to Dickens, had made merry with the scenes of the nomination day. No ceremonial could be at once more useless and more mischievous. In England the candidates were proposed and seconded in face of each other on a public platform in some open street or market-place in the presence of a vast tumultuous crowd, three fourths of whom were generally drunk and all of whom were inflamed by the passion of a furious partisanship. Fortunate indeed was the orator whose speech was anything more than dumb show. The Conservative part of the crowd usually made it a point of honour not to listen to the Liberal candidate or allow him to be heard; the Liberal partisans in the street were equally resolute to drown the eloquence of the Tory candidate. Brass bands and drums not unusually accompanied the efforts of the speakers to make themselves heard. Brickbats, dead cats, and rotten eggs came flying like bewildering meteors around the ears of the rival politicians on the hustings. The crowds generally enlivened the time by a series of faction fights among themselves. Anything more grotesque, more absurd, more outrageous it would be impossible to imagine. The Bill introduced by Mr. Forster would have deserved the support of all rational beings, if it proposed no greater reform than simply the abolition of this abominable

system. But the ballot had long become an indispensable necessity. Bribery, corruption, intimidation, were the monstrous outcome of the system of open voting. Yet for long years no reform had seemed more unlikely than the adoption of the ballot. In Mr. Grote's days there used to be an annual debate on the motion in favour of the ballot, and Mr. Grote generally found himself supported by a very respectable minority, and by some speakers of great influence. Still his proposal was even then regarded by Parliament and the public in general rather as a crotchet than as a practical scheme. In 'The Song of the Box' Thomas Moore made easy ridicule of Grote and his ballot.

> And oh, when at last even this greatest of Grotes
> Must bend to the power that at every door knocks,
> May he drop in the urn like his own silent votes,
> And the tomb of his rest be a large ballot-box.

Lord Palmerston made precisely the same joke years after about Mr. Henry Berkeley and his annual motion for the adoption of the ballot. He expressed a hope that when the inevitable hour came for Mr. Berkeley to quit the scene of his mortal labours, his tomb might be made in the likeness of a ballot-box. Lord Palmerston evidently was not acquainted with Moore's lines about Mr. Grote, and was under the impression that he was making an original joke. In Mr. Berkeley's hands, the ballot debate became less important than it had been with Mr. Grote. On one remarkable occasion indeed, Mr. Berkeley contrived to carry a sort of snap vote against the Government.

The division was taken unexpectedly in a very thin house, and 86 voted for the ballot and 80 against it. But nothing came of this, and the whole question seemed at one time in a fair way to be classed with Mr. Spooner's motion for the withdrawal of the Maynooth Grant or Mr. Newdegate's appeal for the inspection of convents. Lord Palmerston used to argue complacently that the franchise was not a right but a trust; that the trust was exercised on behalf of the community in general, and that the voter was bound to discharge his duty in public so that those for whom he acted should know that he was acting fairly. This way of treating the question held out a temptation to long and futile controversy as to whether the franchise was or was not the right of a free man, and in what we may call the metaphysics of the subject the really practical object of the discussion became lost. Lord Palmerston's description of the franchise did not in the slightest degree affect the argument in favour of the ballot. If the franchise was a trust and only a trust, there was none the less necessity that the trustee should be so protected as to enable him to discharge his trust conscientiously and properly. The objection to the open vote was that in a vast number of instances the voter could not safely vote according to his conscience and his convictions. If he was a tenant he was in terror of his landlord; if he was a workman he was afraid of his employer; if he was a small shopkeeper in a country town he was in dread of offending some wealthy customer; if he was a timid man he shrank

from exposing himself to the violence of a mob. In many cases a man giving a conscientious vote would have had to do so with the certainty that he was bringing ruin upon himself and his family. In Ireland the conflicting power of the landlord and of the crowd made the vote a mere sham. A man in many places dared not vote but as the landlord bade him. Sometimes, when he thought to secure his safety by pleasing the landlord, he ran serious risk by offending the crowd who supported the popular candidate. Voters were dragged to the poll like slaves or prisoners by the landlord and his agents. It was something worse than ridiculous to tell the House of Commons and the public that it was necessary such a system should be kept up because it enabled everybody to see that the voter properly discharged his trust. Yet this argument about the trust and the need of publicity was almost the only piece of reasoning which for many years Lord Palmerston thought it worth his while to offer to the House of Commons. Mr. Mill, who had begun by advocating the ballot, became an opponent of the system, chiefly on the ground that it was unmanly to conceal one's vote. This way of arguing the question only furnished one other illustration of the generous weakness which impaired the effect of much of Mr. Mill's political and social philosophy: the tendency to construct systems based on what Burke called the heroic virtues; the belief that human affairs can be regulated on the assumption that all men can not only become heroic, but that they can be heroic

always. It would be a nobler world indeed if in the giving of our votes as in everything else we could all make up our minds to do right and to defy the consequences. It would be a far finer sight for the moralist or the philosopher to see a concourse of Irish tenants going openly to the poll to vote against their landlords, and calmly accepting eviction as a consequence, than to see the same men screened from the penalty of their patriotic conduct by the mechanical protection of the ballot. The small shopkeeper who offended his most influential customer in the cause of what he believed to be the right, would be a nobler subject for contemplation than the small shopkeeper enabled to do as he thought right without any risk or loss. But an electoral system constructed on these lofty principles would be sure to turn out exactly as the open voting system proved to be: a source of almost boundless demoralisation. It is curious to note that in one of the very speeches in which he condemned the ballot on this higher ground, Mr. Mill actually quoted with approval that sentence of profound practical philosophy in which Burke declared that 'the system which lays its foundations in rare and heroic virtues will be sure to have its superstructure in the basest profligacy and corruption.'

A change, however, suddenly took place in English public feeling. The gross and growing profligacy and violence which disgraced every election began to make men feel that something must be done to get rid of such hideous abuses. Mr. Bright had

always been an earnest advocate of the ballot system; and partly no doubt under his influence, and partly by the teaching of experience and observation, Mr. Gladstone became a convert to the same opinion. In 1869 a committee of the House of Commons was appointed on the motion of Mr. Bruce, the Home Secretary, to enquire into the manner of conducting parliamentary and municipal elections. Lord Hartington was chairman of the committee. Its report was on the whole decidedly in favour of the principle of secret voting. Public opinion came round in a moment. Not many years had passed since the very words 'secret voting' used to be considered enough to stigmatise the ballot, and to make all true men disclaim any approval of it. Now under the impulse of that marvellous breath of reforming energy which was scattering so many ancient traditions the repugnance to the secret vote seemed to have disappeared. We are speaking now of the public out of doors; for a great many members of both Houses of Parliament were still unconverted. Mr. Forster's Bill was stoutly resisted by the Conservatives. It was not merely resisted in the ordinary way; its progress was delayed by that practice of talking against time which has more recently become famous under the name of obstruction. A good many Liberal members liked the ballot in their hearts little better than the Tories did. The Bill contained a wise and just proposal for throwing the legitimate expenses of elections on the public rates. This was rejected in committee by a large majority. A similar proposal, it may be stated,

was introduced again and again in more or less differing forms during the progress of the Ballot Bills, and it was invariably rejected. The majority of the House of Commons is composed of rich men; the majority, it is not unfair to say, is composed also of men who are not recommended to their constituencies by great intellect or distinguished public services. There will always therefore be many persons found to object to any change of system which tends to place a poor man and a rich man more nearly on a footing of equality in a candidature for a seat in Parliament. The long delays which interposed between the introduction of Mr. Forster's Bill and its passing through the House of Commons gave the House of Lords a plausible excuse for rejecting it altogether. The Bill was not read a third time in the Commons until August 8; it was not sent up to the Lords until the 10th of that month—a date later than that usually fixed for the close of the Session. Lord Shaftesbury moved that the Bill be rejected on the ground that there was no time left for a proper consideration of it, and his motion was carried by ninety-seven votes to forty-eight. The manner in which the measure had been dealt with in the House of Commons made it seem clear to the Lords that there was really a very general feeling of dislike to the ballot among the members of the representative chamber, and emboldened them to think that they would be rendering a grateful service by throwing it out.

The House of Lords was right enough in assuming that many members of the House of Commons

were not particularly anxious for the introduction of the ballot. The proposal of the Government was welcome to the voters in general; but it was naturally regarded with hostile feelings by many men who felt small assurance that their seats would be safe if the franchise were to be exercised by everyone in security and independence. The ballot was introduced, we do not hesitate to say, in defiance of the secret prejudices of the majority of the House of Commons which consented to pass it. Mr. Gladstone was determined to pass it in the interest of the voters, of political independence, and of public morals. He was now as thoroughly convinced as Mr. Bright himself that the ballot in these countries would be the very keystone of political independence. Recent publications have enabled us to know that on one occasion at least Lord Palmerston did all he could privately to encourage the House of Lords to reject an important measure introduced and passed in the Commons by his own Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Gladstone. This fact, which would be incredible if it were not made known upon authority impossible to question, was not likely to furnish an example which Mr. Gladstone would follow. Mr. Gladstone accepted the decision of the Lords as a mere passing delay, and with the beginning of the next Session the ballot came up again. It was presented in the form of a Bill to amend the laws relating to procedure at parliamentary and municipal elections, and it included of course the introduction of the system of secret voting. The Bill passed quickly through the

House of Commons. Those who most disliked it began now to see that they must make up their minds to meet their fate. When the Bill went up to the Lords an amendment was introduced into it with the view of making the ballot optional. This preposterous alteration was of course objected to by the Commons, and finally the House of Lords gave it up. There would obviously be no protection whatever for the class of voters whom it was necessary to protect if the ballot were made simply optional. The tenant who exercised his option of voting secretly against his landlord might just as well have voted openly. The landlord would not be slow to assume that the secrecy was adopted for the purpose of giving a vote against him. At the instance of the House of Lords however the ballot was introduced as an experiment, and the Act was passed to continue in force for eight years; that is, until the end of 1880. We may anticipate matters a little by saying that no measure of reform introduced through all that season of splendid reforming energy has given more universal satisfaction or worked with happier effect than the ballot. There is indeed much still to be done to purify the electoral system. The ballot has not extinguished corruption in small boroughs. It is still perfectly possible to carry on the most demoralising system of bribery there. The plan of what we may call payment by results still flourishes in many a small constituency. It is quietly given out that if a certain candidate be elected there will be money flowing through the borough after the election;

and every voter who is open to corruption goes to the polling-place determined to vote for this candidate, because he knows that his vote adds to the chances of the borough's coming in for the refreshing golden shower. Probably nothing could put a stop to the corruption in very small boroughs but their utter disfranchisement, or some system which would group several of them into one constituency. But in all other objects sought by the Ballot Act it has been successful. It has put an end to an enormous amount of corruption, and it may be said to have almost altogether extinguished the illegitimate influence of the landlord, the employer, and the patron. During a debate on woman's suffrage in 1871, Mr. Gladstone stated that if the ballot were once introduced there would be no harm done by allowing women to vote. Nearly ten years have passed since that remarkable declaration, and the proposal to extend the franchise to female householders does not seem to have made much practical progress. But it must be admitted that the adoption of the ballot makes a great difference in the conditions of the controversy. It was one thing to ask that women should have imposed on them the duty of going up to the open poll and recording their votes in public, and quite another thing to ask that they should be allowed to enter a quiet compartment of the polling-place and record an independent vote under the saving shelter of the ballot.

The University Tests Bill was one of the great measures carried successfully into legislation during

this season of unparalleled activity. The effect of this Bill was to admit all lay students of whatever faith to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge on equal terms. This settled practically a controversy and removed a grievance which had been attracting keen public interest for at least five-and-thirty years. Gradually the restrictions which Oxford and Cambridge drew around their systems of education had been relaxed. Dissenters had been admitted first to the advantages of education within the sphere of the Universities, and next to the honours which success in the University course was fitted to command. Twice over within a very few years had a measure for the purpose been carried through the Commons only to be rejected by the Lords. In this busy year of 1871, the Liberal Government introduced the Bill again, and this time, after some remonstrances and futile struggle, the Conservative majority in the House of Lords allowed their prejudices to succumb, and affirmed the principle of religious equality in the distribution of the honours which the two universities have to award to those who win success as students within the sphere of their teaching. The Government also passed a Trades Union Bill, moderating as has already been shown the legislation which bore harshly on the workmen. They established by Act of Parliament the Local Government Board, a new department of the administration entrusted with the care of the public health, the control of the Poor Law system, and all regulations applying to the business of districts throughout the country. The

Government repealed the ridiculous and almost forgotten Ecclesiastical Titles Bill.

The popularity of Mr. Gladstone's Government was all the time somewhat impaired by the line of action, and even perhaps by the personal deportment, of some of its members. Mr. Lowe's budgets were not popular; and Mr. Lowe had a taste for sarcasm which it was pleasant no doubt to indulge in at the expense of heavy men, but which was, like other pleasant things, a little dangerous when enjoyed too freely. One of Mr. Lowe's budgets contained a proposition to make up for deficiency of income by a tax on matches. It seems not unlikely that the whole proposition first arose in Mr. Lowe's mind in connection with a pretty play upon words which he offered as its motto. 'Ex luce lucellum,' he suggested should be a device imprinted on every taxed match-box. The joke had to be explained; its humour wholly vanishes when it is put into English—'a little profit out of light;' not much drollery in that surely. The country laughed at the joke and not with it. The match trade rose up in arms against the proposal. It was shown that that trade was really a very large one, employing vast numbers of poor people, both in the manufacture and the sale, especially in the east end of London; and it was proved that the imposition recommended by Mr. Lowe would put out the light most effectually. All the little boys and girls of the metropolis whose poor bread, whose miserable lucellum depended on the trade, arose in infantile insurrection against Mr. Lowe. There were

vast processions of match-makers and match-sellers to Palace Yard to protest against the tax. The contest was pitiful, painful, ludicrous; no Ministry could endure it long. Mr. Lowe, who had not the slightest idea when he proposed his tax of being regarded as a worse than Lucifer by the vendors of lucifer matches, was only too glad to withdraw from his unenviable position. It was not pleasant to be regarded as a sort of ogre by thousands of poor little ragged boys and girls. Mr. Lowe had ventured on the proposal chiefly because of the example of the United States, where the whole system and social conditions are so different from ours as to afford no guarantee whatever that a tax which is found endurable by the one community is likely to be found endurable by the other. He withdrew his unlucky proposal along with his ill-omened joke, and set himself to work to repair by other ways and means the ravages which warlike times had made in his financial system. No particular harm was done to anybody but the Government. They were made to seem ridiculous. The miserable match-tax was just the sort of thing to impress the popular mind as something niggling, paltry, and pitiful. Mr. Lowe did not hear the end of it for a long time. The attempt and not the deed confounded him. Another member of the administration, Mr. Ayrton, a man of much ability but still more self-confidence, was constantly bringing himself and his Government into quarrels. He was blessed with a gift of offence. If a thing could be done either civilly or rudely, Mr. Ayrton

was pretty sure to do it rudely. He was impatient with dull people, and did not always remember that those unhappy persons not only have their feelings, but sometimes have their votes. He quarrelled with officials; he quarrelled with the newspapers; he seemed to think a civil tongue gave evidence of a feeble intellect. He pushed his way along, trampling on people's prejudices with about as much consideration as a steam-roller shows for the gravel it crushes. Even when Mr. Ayrton was in the right he had a wrong way of showing it.

CHAPTER LX.

THE BLACK SEA CLAUSE: THE 'ALABAMA' ARBITRATION.

MEANWHILE the portentous changes which were taking place on the Continent of Europe had, as was natural, their effect on England and the English Government. The Emperor Napoleon having taken to himself a Liberal Minister, M. Emile Ollivier, one of the famous Five who for years had represented Opposition in the French Legislative Chamber, had sought to get a renewed charter for himself and his dynasty by means of a *plebiscite*. Representing the question at issue as one of revolution or social order, the Emperor obtained a very large majority of Ayes in favour of his policy and his house, seven and a quarter million Ayes against one and a half million Noes. But the minority was considerable, and one peculiarity made it specially ominous. There were more than 52,000 'Noes' among the votes of the army and navy. The Mexican expedition and its ghastly failure had much injured the *prestige* of the Emperor with the two services. The truth could not be concealed that he had been peremptorily ordered out of Mexico by the United States Government and that he had obeyed the command, leaving Maximilian to

his fate. Louis Napoleon saw that he must do something to recover his military popularity. The overthrow of Austria by Prussia had roused a strong feeling of jealousy in France. M. Thiers in particular had endeavoured to keep up an angry mood against the Imperial Government. He constantly reproached the Emperor for not interposing in some way to protect Austria and restrict the ambition of Prussia. Louis Napoleon therefore found himself driven to try the gamester's last and desperate throw. He seized the first excuse for forcing a war on Prussia.

It is probable that war would have come in any case. M. Prevost-Paradol had compared France and Prussia to two express trains started from opposite points along the same line of rails. The collision must come ; it was merely a question of time. The comparison was happy. Prussia knew very well that her success over Austria had aroused the jealousy and the fears of France. France began to revive the old talk of the frontier on the Rhine. Bismarck had probably made up his mind that the quarrel would have to be fought out one day. Still it was a fatal mistake of the Emperor Napoleon to force the quarrel on such a pretext as the fact that the Spanish people had invited a distant relation of the King of Prussia to become Sovereign of Spain. Louis Napoleon managed to put himself completely in the wrong. The King of Prussia at once induced his relative to withdraw from the candidature in order not to disturb the susceptibilities of France ; and then the French Government pressed for a general pledge that the

King of Prussia would never on any future occasion allow of any similar candidature. When it came to this, there was an end to negotiation. It was clear then that the Emperor was resolved to have a quarrel. Count Bismarck must have smiled a grim smile. His enemy had delivered himself into Bismarck's hands.

The Emperor had been for some time in failing health. He had not been paying much attention to the details of his administration. False security and self-conceit had operated among his generals and his War Department to the utter detriment of the army. Nothing was ready. The whole system was falling to pieces. Long after France had declared war, the army that was to go to Berlin was only dragging heavily towards the frontier. The experience of what had happened to Austria might have told anyone that the moment Prussia saw her opportunity she would move with the direct swiftness of an eagle's flight. But the French army stuck as if it was in mud. What everyone expected came to pass. The Prussians came down on the French like the rush of a torrent. The fortunes of the war were virtually decided in a day. Then the French lost battle after battle. The Emperor dared not return to Paris. The defence—for the Prussians had long since become the invaders—was carried on with regard to the Emperor's political fortunes rather than to the military necessities of the hour. There were nothing but French defeats until there came at last the crowning disaster of Sedan. The Emperor surrendered his sword, and

was a captive in the hands of his enemies. The Second Empire was gone in a moment. Paris proclaimed the republic; the Empress Eugenie fled to England; the Second Empire was all in the dust; the conqueror at Versailles was hailed as German Emperor.

We need not follow the fortunes of the war. France made many a brave and brilliant attempt to rally; but it was too late. Official neglect and mismanagement had done their work. No courage, no patriotism, could now retrieve the fortunes of the field. Marshal Bazaine, the ill-omened soldier of the Mexican campaign, surrendered at Metz with a vast army; Paris was invested, was besieged; had to give up, or famine would have done the work for her. The conquering enemy had to be spoken with at the gate. France had nothing for it but to accept the terms imposed on her. She lost two provinces and had to pay an enormous fine; and the war was over.

The sympathies of the English people generally were at first almost altogether with Prussia. The policy of the Emperor Napoleon had seemed so gross and outrageous that the public voice here applauded the resistance of Germany to his attempted dictation. But when the Empire fell the feeling suddenly changed. It was the common idea that the Prussians ought to have been content with Sedan and the complete destruction of the Bonapartist Empire and have made generous terms with the Republic. Great popular meetings were held in Trafalgar Square, London, and in various provincial cities, to express sympathy with the hardly-entreated French. The sympathy of

the Irish populations had been with France all through. The old bonds of comradeship dating from the Irish Brigade and from long before it had still their hold upon the emotional and impassioned Irish nature. Many persons everywhere thought the Government ought to do something to assist the French Republic. Some were of opinion that the glory of England would suffer if she did not get into a fight with some Power or other. It came out in the course of the eager diplomatic discussions which were going on that there had been some secret talk at different times of a private engagement between France and Prussia which would have allowed France on certain conditions to annex Belgium. This astounding revelation excited alarm and anger in England. The Government met that possible danger by at once pressing upon France and Prussia a new treaty by which these Powers bound themselves jointly with England to maintain the independence of Belgium and to take up arms against any State invading it. The Government might fairly claim to have thus provided satisfactorily against any menace to the integrity and independence of Belgium, and they prepared against the more general dangers of the hour by asking for a large vote to enable them to strengthen the military defences of the country. But they were seriously embarrassed by the manner in which Russia suddenly proposed to deal with the Treaty of Paris. One article of that Treaty declared that 'the Black Sea is neutralised; its waters and its ports, thrown open to the mercantile marine of every nation, are formally and in

perpetuity interdicted to the flag of war, either of the Powers possessing its coasts or of any other Power,' and the Sultan of Turkey and the Emperor of Russia engaged to establish or maintain no military or maritime arsenals on the shores of that sea. Russia now took advantage of the war between France and Prussia to say that she would not submit to be bound by that article of the Treaty any longer. The Russian statesmen pleaded as a justification of this blunt and sudden proceeding that the Treaty of Paris had been ignored by other Powers and in a variety of ways since the time of its signature, and that Russia could not be expected to endure for ever an article which bore heavily, directly, and specially upon her.

The manner of making the announcement was startling, ominous, and offensive. But there really was not much that any English statesman could do to interfere with Russia's declared intentions. Two of the great Powers concerned in the Treaty of Paris were occupied too gravely with concerns of their own to have much interest in the neutralisation of the Black Sea. It was not likely that France or Prussia would stop just then from the death-grapple in which they were engaged to join in coercing Russia to keep to the disputed article in the Treaty. Austria of course would not under such circumstances undertake to interfere. It would have been a piece of preposterous quixotry on the part of England to take on herself alone the responsibility of maintaining the sanctity of the Treaty. Besides, it had long been clear

to every practical politician that sooner or later, by one process or another, Russia would shake herself free from the obligation imposed on her by the clause which she now challenged. Literally it affected all the great Powers alike, but in fact it only concerned Russia, and it was devised as a means of restraining her alone. The Black Sea is virtually a Russian lake. At least it may be thus described if we think of military and political questions only; for Turkey's use of the Black Sea could hardly be of vital moment to Europe, and Turkey and Russia divide between them the Euxine shores. However wise and just therefore the desire of the Western Powers to have the war flag of Russia kept out of the waters of the Black Sea, it must have been clear to every statesman, even at the time when the Treaty was made, that should Russia ever be in a position to demand a release from the conditions which her defeat in the Crimea imposed upon her, she would take advantage of the opportunity. It must have been expected that she would insist upon the abrogation of the clause in the Treaty of Paris which shut her navy out of the waters that washed her own southern shores. But the manner of demanding the abrogation of the clause surprised and offended even more than the demand itself. There was something Calmuck in the coarse bluntness of the obvious admission that Russia now insisted on new conditions because she found that there was no possibility of any Western alliance to interfere with her will. If England had gone to war with Russia, she would have gone to war

for the maintenance of an article in the Treaty of Paris, which no one believed could be long maintained in any case and for which most of the European Powers cared nothing either way. Lord Granville confined himself to remonstrating against the extraordinary assumption that any Power which signed a treaty could legitimately and of its own motion repudiate any part of the treaty at any moment when it thought fit. If Russia cared about argument it must be admitted that Lord Granville's argument was beyond reply. Lord Granville merely affirmed that when several parties have entered into a joint engagement it cannot be open to any one of them to withdraw from it whenever he pleases, without consulting the others. But of course Russia cared nothing about argument or fairness in the matter. She saw that she had an unprecedented chance, a chance perhaps never to occur again, for getting out of her engagement with impunity; and she seized upon it and held to it.

We do not see how even a Russian, outside the official world, could undertake to justify the action of the Russian Government. On the other hand, we fear that the Russian Emperor might find a good deal in the events then passing in Europe to plead in excuse of his policy. Public law did not seem for the time to be held in very high regard. The transactions between Prussia and France with regard to Belgium were disgraceful to the statesmen who took part in them. They were cynically avowed by Count Bismarck when he found it suited his convenience to

betray his late accomplices. A feeble attempt was made on the part of the accomplices to disavow them, or deny them, or escape in some way from the shame of having set them going. Each party fell back upon the policy of the husband and wife meeting by chance at the masked ball, each of whom makes overtures to the unrecognised other, and each of whom on a mutual recognition insists that the overtures were only made with the object of trying the other's virtue. Thus Europe was amused for a few days, and ought no doubt to have been scandalised, by the controversy between France and Prussia as to which was the tempter, which was the tempted, and what was the real motive of the temptation. Then again the King of Italy took advantage of the withdrawal of the French army of occupation from Rome to announce that in the interest of order and to deliver Rome and the Pope from the tyranny of the Pope's foreign guards he felt compelled to march the Italian troops into the city, take forcible possession of it, and make it the capital of his dominions. We do not propose to discuss or even to touch upon the religious question then at issue between the Vatican and the King of Italy. We are willing to look at all that took place from the point of view of those who desired that Italy should become one united kingdom and should have Rome for her capital. Even from this point of view it seems absolutely impossible to justify the course taken by the King of Italy. It is easy to understand how Italians and other men should say to themselves 'now that the thing has

been done, we are glad it is done, and is over.' But it would baffle the ingenuity of any casuist to find a justification for such a mode of solving a great political question unless on the bold assumption that the stronger has always a right to do anything he thinks proper with the weaker. At all events it is not surprising that when the Emperor of Russia saw such strokes of policy approved of by the Cabinets of Great Powers like England, he should have said to himself that there was no reason why he alone of all other Sovereigns on the European Continent should not be at liberty to lay rude hands on opportunity. There was apparently a general scramble going on; and the Emperor Alexander may not have seen why there should be any law of morality or honour specially binding on him which was not binding on his neighbours. Such of course would not have been the view of a moralist; but the Emperor Alexander was perhaps of the way of thinking of that philosopher who has argued that it is immoral to be in advance of the morality of one's age. Perhaps Alexander thought that in acting as he did he was only acting up to the morality of his contemporaries.

Lord Granville, however, continued to remonstrate. It was necessary to find some way of getting the European Powers decently out of the difficulty in which they were placed. To enforce the Treaty was out of the question; but on the other hand it did not look seemly that they should put up quite tamely with the dictatorial resolve of Russia. The ingenious mind of Count Bismarck found a way of putting a

fair show on the action of Europe. He suggested that a conference should be held in London to talk the whole matter over. On November 26, 1870, he addressed a circular to Austria, Turkey, Italy, and Russia, requesting them to authorise their representatives to assemble in London at a conference of the Powers which had signed the Treaty of March 30, 1856, in order 'to discuss the questions which are raised in connexion with the communications in the circular of the Imperial Russian Cabinet.' This invitation was stated to have been issued after the English Cabinet had assured Count Bismarck of its assent. Lord Granville politely assumed that the Russian Government had merely announced its wish to have the clause in the Treaty abrogated as a matter for the consideration of the European Powers, and that the conference was to be assembled 'without any foregone conclusion as to its results.' This graceful little fiction was welcomed by all diplomatists. The conference met with every becoming appearance of a full belief in the minds of all its members that they were about to consider a proposal which they might either accept or reject as their free judgment should determine. The conference assembled on January 17, 1871, and began its labours by an abstract declaration of principle. A special protocol was signed, affirming it to be an essential principle of the law of nations that no State could release itself from the engagements of a treaty unless with the consent of the other contracting Powers. This important declaration, which amounted exactly to the announcement of the fact that there

must be at least two parties to a bargain, was solemnly agreed upon, and then the conference felt itself quite free to finish its work on March 13, 1871, by agreeing to a Treaty abrogating the clause for the neutralisation of the Black Sea. There was something a little farcical about the whole transaction. We learn from Madame de Remusat that when the great Napoleon played chess he liked to move the pieces occasionally in any way that suited his plans, and without any particular regard to the established rules of the game. If it seemed advantageous to him at some particular moment to give to his king the unlimited movement of the queen, he was in the habit of composedly adopting this new principle. Now we can perhaps imagine a few old-fashioned courtiers being a little offended at this arbitrary and one-sided plan of action, and conscious at the same time of their own inability to overrule the will of the great conqueror. What could be a more honourable and prudent way of reconciling principle and interest than to hold a chess conference, pass a resolution that it is one of the essential principles of the game that no player can alter its laws merely to please himself; and then after this saving protest proceed to authorise the Emperor Napoleon to make the particular moves that he happened just then to desire? Something like this was the policy pursued by the conference held in London. It did not tend to raise the credit or add to the popularity of the English Government. We do not know that there was anything better to do; we can only say that the Government deserves commiseration

which at an important European crisis can do nothing better.

Other troubles began to press upon Mr. Gladstone's Government. A few weeks after the issue of the Russian circular repudiating the neutralisation clause in the Treaty of Paris, General Grant in opening the Congress of the United States announced that the time had come when the American Government must take some decided steps for the settlement of the *Alabama* claims. This dispute had reached what we may call its second stage. The first was when the English Government declined to admit any responsibility for the losses inflicted on American commerce. The second was arrived at when the more sober judgment of Lord Stanley acknowledged a willingness to submit the question to some manner of arbitrament. When matters had gone so far it was natural that attempts should be made at a convention for the settlement of the claims. In one instance a convention, devised by Mr. Reverdy Johnson, then American Minister in England, had actually been signed by Lord Clarendon, Foreign Secretary, whose death in June 1870 was followed by Lord Granville's removal from the Colonial to the Foreign Office. The Senate of the United States however rejected this convention by a majority of fifty-four to one, and Mr. Reverdy Johnson resigned his office. The doom of the convention was chiefly brought about by the efforts of Mr. Charles Sumner, a leading member of the Senate of the United States. Most readers are probably aware of the fact that treaties concluded on behalf of the American Govern-

ment have to be referred for confirmation to the United States Senate, and that it is in the power of the Senate either to confirm or to reject them. In the foreign policy of the American Republic the Senate exercises a direct and most important influence. Mr. Sumner was at that time the most eloquent and the most influential member of the Senate. He was a man of remarkable force of character, a somewhat 'masterful' temperament, to use an expressive provincial word, a temperament corresponding with his great stature, his stately presence, and his singularly handsome and expressive face. He was one of the leaders of the anti-slavery movement, and the murderous assault made upon him some twelve years before in the old Senate Chamber at Washington by a Southern planter had filled the world then with horror and alarm. Sir George Cornewall Lewis happily described it as the first blow in a Civil War. Mr. Sumner had been for the greater part of his life an enthusiastic admirer of England and English institutions. He had made himself acquainted with England and Englishmen, and was a great favourite in English society. He was a warm friend of Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, the Duke of Argyll, and many other eminent English public men. He was particularly enthusiastic about England because of the manner in which she had emancipated her slaves and the emphatic terms in which English society always expressed its horror of the system of slavery. In his own country Mr. Sumner passed for an Anglo-maniac. When the American Civil War broke out he expected

with full confidence to find the sympathies of England freely given to the side of the North. He was struck with amazement when he found that they were to so great an extent given to the South. But when he saw that the *Alabama* and other Southern cruisers had been built in England, manned in England, and allowed to leave our ports with apparently the applause of three-fourths of the representative men of England, his feelings towards this country underwent a sudden and a most complete change. He now persuaded himself that the sympathies of the English people were actually with slavery, and that England was resolved to lend her best help for the setting up of a slave-owning Republic to the destruction of the American Union.

In this Mr. Sumner was mistaken. Great wrong was thoughtlessly done to the American Union by the acts of statesmen and others in England, but it is not true that there was any general sympathy with slavery or any national treachery to the American Union. The whole question has been already discussed in these pages, and the writer has not hesitated to condemn in the strongest terms much of the policy and many of the utterances of some of the leading statesmen of England. But Mr. Sumner was mistaken in his main conclusion; the conclusion that love of slavery and hatred of the Union dictated the foolish things that were often said, and the unrightful things that were sometimes done. His mind, however, became filled with a fervour of anger against England. The zeal of his cause ate him up. All his love for England

turned into hate. He was as little under the influence of sober reason, when he discussed the conduct of England, as Burke was when he declaimed against the French Revolution. During all his career, Mr. Sumner had been a professed lover of peace; had made peace his prevailing principle of action; and yet he now spoke and acted as if he were determined that there must be war between England and the United States. Mr. Sumner denounced the convention made by Mr. Reverdy Johnson, with a force of argument and of passionate eloquence which would have borne down all opposition if the Senate had not already been almost unanimously of one mind with him. It is right to say that the particular convention agreed on between Lord Clarendon and Mr. Reverdy Johnson does not seem to have been one that the American Senate could reasonably be expected to accept, or that could possibly give satisfaction to the American people. Mr. Reverdy Johnson was a Marylander, and may possibly have had some tinge of Southern sympathies. With a kindly and good-natured purpose to put an end to an international quarrel, he does not seem to have considered the difference between skinning over a wound and healing it. The defect of his convention was that it made the whole question a mere matter of individual claims. It professed to have to deal with a number of personal and private claims of various kinds, pending since a former settlement in 1853—claims made on the one side by British subjects against the American Government, and on the other by American citizens

against the English Government; and it proposed to throw in the *Alabama* claims with all the others, and have a convention for the general clearance of the whole account. Now it must be evident to anyone, English or American, who considers what the complaints made by the American Government were, that this way of dealing with the question could not possibly satisfy the American people. It is surprising that a statesman like Lord Clarendon could for a moment have persuaded himself that there would be the slightest use in presenting such a convention to the American Senate. That he did so persuade himself and others is only one additional illustration of the curious ignorance of the condition of American political and national feeling which misguided England's policy during the whole of the American war. The claim set up by the United States, on account of the cruise of the *Alabama*, was first of all a national claim. The American Government and people said, 'The course you have taken has prolonged the war against us. You have given comfort and strength to our enemies. You have allowed them to use your ports as arsenals and points of departure for their attacks on us; your flag has protected their cruisers; your sailors have manned their vessels and shotted their guns. We claim of you as a nation injured by a nation.' To this the convention signed by Lord Clarendon made answer, 'We are willing that the two nations shall go into arbitration as to any individual claims for personal damages which a few Englishmen may have on the one side and a few

Americans on the other. We are willing to look into the items of any little bill which Mr. Thompson, of New York, may present, for injuries done to his property, provided that you will do us the favour of perusing in the same spirit any bill which may be presented to you on behalf of Mr. Johnson, of Manchester.' This is really a fair statement of the difference between the convention which the United States Senate rejected and that which the American Government afterwards accepted.

The English Government wisely gave way. They consented to send out a Commission to Washington to confer with an American Commission, and to treat the whole question in dispute as national and not merely individual. The Commission was to enter upon all the various subjects of dispute unsettled between England and the United States ; the *Alabama* claims, the San Juan Boundary, and the Canadian Fishery Question. The Dominion of Canada was to be represented on the Commission. The English commissioners were Earl de Grey and Ripon (afterwards created Marquis of Ripon, in return for his services at Washington), Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Mountague Bernard, Professor of International Law at the University of Oxford ; and Sir Edward Thornton, English Minister at Washington. Sir John A. Macdonald represented Canada. The American Commissioners were Mr. Hamilton Fish, Secretary of State, General Schenck, afterwards American Minister in England, Mr. J. C. Bancroft

Davis, Mr. Justice Nelson, Mr. Justice Williams, and Mr. E. R. Hoar.

The Commissioners held a long series of meetings in Washington, and at length arrived at a basis of arbitration. This was set forth in a memorable document, the Treaty of Washington. The Treaty of Washington acknowledged the international character of the dispute; and it opened with a remarkable admission on the part of the English Government It announced that 'Her Britannic Majesty has authorised her High Commissioners and Plenipotentiaries to express, in a friendly spirit, the regret felt by her Majesty's Government for the escape, under whatever circumstances, of the *Alabama* and other vessels from British ports, and for the depredations committed by those vessels.' This was a very unusual acknowledgment to make as the opening of a document intended to establish a tribunal of arbitration for the claims in dispute. It ought not in itself to be considered as anything of a humiliation. In public as in private life, it ought to be honourable rather than otherwise to express regret that we should even unwittingly have done harm to our neighbour, or allowed harm to be done to him; that we have shot our arrow o'er the house and hurt our brother. But when compared with the stand which English ministers had taken not many years before, this was indeed a considerable change of attitude. It is not surprising that many Englishmen chafed at the appearance of submission which it presented. The Treaty then proceeded to lay down

three rules, which it was agreed should be accepted by the Arbitrators as applicable to the case. These rules were: 'a neutral Government is bound: first, to use due diligence to prevent the fitting-out, arming, or equipping, within its jurisdiction, of any vessel which it has reasonable ground to believe is intended to cruise or to carry on war against a Power with which it is at peace, and also to use like diligence to prevent the departure from its jurisdiction of any vessel intended to cruise or carry on war as above, such vessel having been specially adapted, in whole or in part, within such jurisdiction to warlike use. Secondly, not to permit or suffer either belligerent to make use of its ports or waters as the base of naval operations against the other, or for the purpose of the renewal or augmentation of military supplies or arms, or the recruitment of men. Thirdly, to exercise due diligence in its own ports and waters, and as to all persons within its jurisdiction, to prevent any violation of the foregoing obligations and duties.'

The British Commissioners followed up the acceptance of these three rules by a saving clause, declaring that the English Government could not assent to them as a 'statement of principles of international law which were in force at the time when the claims arose;' but that, 'in order to evince its desire of strengthening the friendly relations between the two countries, and of making satisfactory provision for the future,' it agreed that in deciding the questions arising out of the claims these principles should be accepted, 'and the high contracting parties agree to

observe these rules between themselves in future, and to bring them to the knowledge of other maritime Powers, and to invite them to accede to them.' The Treaty then went on to provide for the settlement of the *Alabama* claims by a tribunal of five arbitrators, one to be appointed by the Queen, and the others respectively by the President of the United States, the King of Italy, the President of the Swiss Confederation, and the Emperor of Brazil. This tribunal was to meet in Geneva, and was to decide by a majority all the questions submitted to it. The Treaty further provided for a tribunal to settle what may be called individual claims on either side, and another commission to meet afterwards at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and deal with the Fishery Question, an old outstanding dispute as to the reciprocal rights of British and American subjects to fish on each other's coasts. It referred the question of the northern boundary between the British North American territories and the United States to the arbitration of the German Emperor. It also opened the navigation of the St. Lawrence and other rivers.

Some delay was caused in the meeting of the tribunal of arbitration at Geneva by the sudden presentation on the part of the American Government of what were called the indirect claims. To the surprise of everybody, the American case when presented was found to include claims for vast and indeed almost limitless damages, for indirect losses alleged to be caused by the cruise of the *Alabama* and the other vessels. The loss by the transfer of trade to

English vessels, the loss by increased rates of insurance, and all imaginable losses incident to the prolongation of the war, were now made part of the American claims. It was clear that if such a principle were admitted there was no possible reason why the claims should not include every dollar spent in the whole operations of the war and in supplying any of the war's damages, from the first day when the *Alabama* put to sea. No one could undertake to say as a matter of certainty that the Southern Confederates might not have submitted at once if only the *Alabama* had been seized and detained, and therefore indirect claims might just as well be stretched out at once so as to cover all the subsequent expenses of the war. In truth, the indirect claims were not only absurd, but even monstrous, and the English Government had not for one moment the slightest idea of admitting them as part of the case to be laid before the arbitrators at Geneva. The bare suggestion seemed more like a rude practical joke than a statesmanlike proposition. Even men like Mr. Bright, who had been devoted friends of the North during the war, protested against this insufferable claim. It was at last withdrawn. We now know on the best possible authority that the American Government never meant to press it. Mr. John Russell Young's interesting account of his journey 'Around the World with General Grant' gives an account of a conversation he had with the late President of the United States on the subject of the indirect claims. Mr. Young assures his readers that all his reports of

statements made by General Grant have been submitted to General Grant's own revision. General Grant told Mr. Young that he was personally opposed to the presentation of the indirect claims, and that his Secretary of State, Mr. Fish, was also opposed to them. 'I,' said General Grant, 'never believed in the presentation of indirect claims against England. I did not think it would do any good. I knew England would not consider them, and that it would complicate our meritorious case by giving her something to complain about.' Mr. Fish agreed in this view, but was of opinion that Mr. Sumner had to be considered. Mr. Sumner was the chairman of the Senate's Committee on Foreign Affairs, a formidable man at such a time. He was not cordial to the Treaty, and was displeased because General Grant and Mr. Fish had already overruled one of his suggestions, 'that the first condition of peace with England should be the withdrawal of her flag from the North American continent.' That suggestion General Grant rightly described as a declaration of war, and 'I wanted peace, not war.' Mr. Sumner had laid great stress on indirect claims, and not to offend him, and not to leave an opening for future complaints on the part of 'demagogues,' it was thought by Mr. Fish that the best way of getting rid of the indirect claims would be to let them go to the Geneva arbitration. General Grant allowed himself to be convinced against his will. 'But neither Mr. Fish nor myself expected any good from the presentation. It really did harm to the Treaty by putting our Government and those

in England who were our friends in a false position. It was a mistake, but well-intended. It is a mistake ever to say more than you mean, and as we never meant the indirect claims, we should not have presented them, even to please Mr. Sumner.' It was indeed a profound mistake. It was a stroke of policy which no statesman should ever have stooped to sanction. The arbitration was on the point of being broken off. The excitement in England was intense. The American Government had at last to withdraw the claims. The Geneva arbitrators of their own motion declared that all such claims were invalid and contrary to international law. The mere fact of their presentation went far to destroy all the credit which the United States would have obtained by the firm maintenance of their just demands and their recognition by the Court of Arbitration.

The decision of the Geneva Tribunal went against England. The court were unanimous in finding England responsible for the acts of the *Alabama*. A majority found her responsible for the acts of the *Florida* and for some of those of the *Shenandoah*, but not responsible for those of other vessels. They awarded a sum of about three millions and a quarter sterling as compensation for all losses and final settlement of all claims including interest. Sir Alexander Cockburn, who attended the sittings of the court as the representative of England, presented a long and eloquent protest against a great part of the finding of the tribunal. While admitting the decision in the case of the *Alabama*, and recommending submission

to the general award, Sir Alexander Cockburn made a sort of historical vindication, or apologia, of the conduct of the English Government during the Civil War. It was an eloquent, patriotic, and impassioned *plaidoyer*, which seemed oddly out of place in the somewhat dry and business-like records of the tribunal's transactions. It occupied 250 pages of the *London Gazette*. Many readers admired it; some smiled at it. The great majority of Englishmen did not read it. It was not so much preserved as entombed in the ponderous pages of the official journal.

The German Emperor was left to decide as to the ownership of the small island of San Juan, near Vancouver's Island, a question remaining unsettled since the Oregon Treaty, and already explained in this work. The Emperor decided that the American claim to the island was just. San Juan had for years been in a somewhat hazardous condition of joint occupation by England and the United States. It was evacuated by England, in consequence of the award, at the close of November, 1873.

The principle of arbitration had not thus far worked in a manner calculated greatly to delight the English people. In each case the award had gone decidedly against them. No doubt it had gone against them because the right of each case was against them; and those who submit to arbitration have no business to complain because the decision is not given in their favour. England had in any case gained much by the policy which submitted the dispute to a peaceful tribunal. She had saved her

own people and her opponents as well from the terrible ordeal of a war in which victory would have been only one degree better than defeat. She had avoided all the legacy of reciprocal hate which is the inevitable penalty of war. She had done her part towards the establishment of a great principle for the benefit of all coming generations. Yet it would be impossible to say that the feeling of the English people was one of unmixed satisfaction. The bulk of a population is not made up of moral philosophers; and what most of the English people saw was that England had been compelled in homely phrase to 'knuckle down' to America. The policy which accepted the arbitration seems to us to have been entirely wise, honourable, statesmanlike and just. The fault to be found was with that earlier policy which gave the United States only too fair a ground for asserting their claims. But it is certain that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues suffered in public esteem by the mere fact of their having accepted the arbitration which went so signally against England. They were somewhat in the position of a Government who have to submit to rigorous and humiliating terms of peace. They may not have been responsible for the war. It may have been no act of theirs which made the acceptance of the harsh terms a cruel necessity. It may not be open to any one to say that they had any practical alternative but to submit to the demands of the occasion. All this may be true. Yet none the less is the Government to be pitied which has to submit to any terms of peace by which its people

seem to be humbled. The Conservative party made it for a long time a great point against Mr. Gladstone's Government that he had accepted the treaty of Washington. They did not always seem to reflect that a leading Conservative, Sir Stafford Northcote, had been made one of the joint commissioners in order that the arrangement might not seem the mere act of a political party. Perhaps in one or two instances the manner in which the Treaty was vindicated may have helped to embitter the sacrifice. Mr. Lowe, for instance, put it as a clear saving of money, pointing out that a war would have cost much more than the expense of paying off the award. This was not the happiest way of commending the transaction to the sympathies of a proud and somewhat unreasoning public. However that may be, it is certain that the effect of the Geneva arbitration was to create a sore and angry feeling among Englishmen in general. The feeling found expression with some; smouldered in sullenness with others. It was unreasonable and unjust; but it was not altogether unnatural; and it had its effect on the popularity of Mr. Gladstone's Government.

The opening of the Session of 1872 was made melancholy by the announcement that Lord Mayo, the Viceroy of India, had been killed by a fanatical assassin in a convict settlement, on one of the Andaman Islands which the Viceroy was inspecting. Lord Mayo had borne himself well in his difficult position, and had won the admiration of men of all parties by his firmness, his energy, his humanity, and his justice.

CHAPTER LXI.

THE TIDE ON THE TURN.

The Liberal Ministry continued somehow to fall off in popularity. They made a great many enemies. This fact was for the most part rather to their credit than otherwise. They came into office pledged to carry out certain reforms, and they did carry them out regardless of the offence they gave to class privileges and vested interests. A great reforming administration must always count on making enemies, and enemies whose hostility will be subtle and enduring. The Prime Minister himself was personally too much absorbed in the zeal of his cause not sometimes to run counter to the feelings, the prejudices, the sensitive jealousies of men less earnest and less self-forgetting. Mr. Gladstone was profoundly serious in his purposes of reform; and very serious men are seldom popular in a society like that of London. The long series of bold and vigorous reforms was undoubtedly causing the public to lose its breath. People were getting tired of going on, as an ordinary walker gets tired of trying to keep up with some man who is bent on walking as fast and as far as he possibly can without rest or interruption. The inevitable reaction was setting in. It must have come in any

case. No popularity, no skill, no cunning in the management of men, no quality or endowment on the part of the Prime Minister, could have wholly prevented that result. Mr. Gladstone was not cunning in the management of men. He would probably have despised himself for availing of such a craft had he possessed it. He showed his feelings too plainly. If men displeased him he seldom took the trouble to conceal his displeasure. He was too often 'preoccupied,' as the French phrase puts it, to think of petty courtesies and small social arts. It was murmured among his followers that he was dictatorial; and no doubt he was dictatorial in the sense that he had strong purposes himself, and was earnest in trying to press them upon other men. His very religious opinions served to interfere with his social popularity. He seemed to be a curious blending of the English High Churchman and the Scottish Presbyterian. He displeased the ordinary English middle class by leaning too much to Ritualism, and on the other hand, he often offended the Roman Catholics by his impassioned diatribes against the Pope and the Church of Rome. One or two appointments made by or under the authority of Mr. Gladstone gave occasion to considerable controversy and to something like scandal. One of these was the appointment of the Attorney-General, Sir Robert Collier, to a Puisne Judgeship of the Court of Common Pleas, in order technically to qualify him for a seat on the bench of a new Court of Appeal—that is to say, to become one of the paid members of the Judicial Com-

mittee of the Privy Council. The statute required that every judge of the Court of Appeal should have been a judge of one of the ordinary courts; and Sir Robert Collier was passed through the Court of Common Pleas in order that he might have the technical qualification. There was not the slightest suggestion of any improper motive on the part of Mr. Gladstone, or lack of legal or judicial fitness on the part of Sir Robert Collier. On the contrary, it was admitted that Sir Robert Collier had helped the Government out of a difficulty by taking an appointment which several judges had declined and which had not quite such a position as that which the traditions of his office entitled him to expect. It seemed, however, as if there was something of a trick in the act which thus passed him through the one court in order to give him a technical qualification for the other. A vote of censure on the Government was moved in the House of Lords, and the universal impression was that it would be carried. Some of the Opposition leaders did all they could to make it the means of injuring the Government, and even went the length of including in their complaints the fact that the Lord Chancellor had given an appointment as Judge of a County Court to the Mr. Beales who was President of the Reform League when the Hyde Park railings were thrown down. The vote of censure was, however, rejected by eighty-nine against eighty-seven. A similar attempt was made in the House of Commons, and was defeated; only however by a majority of twenty-seven, a small majority

in the House where the strength of the Government was supposed to lie. Another appointment which led to controversy was that of the Rev. W. W. Harvey to the Rectory of Ewelme. The law required that the Rector of Ewelme should be a member of the Convocation of Oxford, and Mr. Harvey, who had been educated at Cambridge, was made a member of Oxford Convocation—by Oxford, not by Mr. Gladstone—in order to qualify him for the appointment. In this instance too there was no question either as to the motives of the minister or the merits of the appointment. But, as in the former case, there seemed to many persons something like a trick in the manner of obtaining the qualification. Each case gave a chance to Mr. Gladstone's enemies which they were not slow to use. He was accused of casuistry, which to many Englishmen seems a sort of crime; and of Jesuitry, which to some Englishmen seems the worst of crimes. It was part of Mr. Gladstone's curious fortune to be denounced by certain enemies as a Roman Catholic in disguise, at the very time when he was estranging and offending some of his most earnest Catholic supporters by the energy of his attacks upon the political influence of their Church. There can be no doubt that, although in neither House of Parliament could any expression of censure be obtained, the 'Colliery explosion,' as it was called, and the 'Ewelme scandal,' gave a downward push to the declining popularity of Mr. Gladstone's administration.

The 'liquor interest' too was soon in arms against

him. The United Kingdom Alliance 'for the suppression of the liquor traffic' had of late years been growing so strong as to become a positive influence in politics. Its object was to bring about the adoption of legislation which should leave it in the power of a two-thirds majority in each locality to stop altogether, if it were so thought fit, the public sale of intoxicating drinks. The Parliamentary leader of the agitation was Sir Wilfrid Lawson, a man of position, of great energy, and of thorough earnestness. Sir Wilfrid Lawson was not, however, merely energetic and earnest. He had a peculiarly effective style of speaking, curiously unlike that which might be expected from the advocate of an austere and somewhat fanatical sort of legislation. He was a humourist of a fresh and vigorous order, and he always took care to amuse his listeners and never allowed his speeches to bore them. The Alliance was always urging on the Government and public opinion against the drink traffic, and it became clear that something must be done to regulate the trade. Mr. Bruce, the Home Secretary, brought in a Bill which the Alliance condemned as feebleness, and which the publicans resented as oppression. The Bill increased the penalties for drunkenness, and shortened the hours during which public-houses might be kept open on Sundays and on week days as well. The effect of the passing of this measure was to throw the publicans into open hostility to the Government. The publicans had an old grudge against Mr. Gladstone himself. In former days he had been guilty of passing a measure which

allowed the light wines of France to be sold in bottles by the grocers, and drunk in pastry-cook shops and refreshment houses; and the publicans highly disapproved of such innovations on the traditional ways of the British constitution. Some of their advocates indeed had denounced with a generous ardour the policy which would promote intemperance by allowing anyone but a public-house keeper to sell a glass of wine. The debaucheries of the pastry-cook shops were described in language that recalled the days of Colonel Sibthorp's prognostications as to the corrupting influence of French wines and French morals. Mr. Bruce's Licensing Act was a new wrong charged at the door of Mr. Gladstone. Gin Lane and Beer Street rose in rebellion against him. The publicans were a numerous body; they were well organised; the network of their trade and their Association spread all over the kingdom. The hostile feelings of some were perhaps not unnaturally embittered by the fact that many speakers and writers treated all publicans alike, made no distinction between the reputable and the disreputable, and involved in a common condemnation honest 'Mine Host of the Garter' and rogueish Boniface of 'The Beaux' Stratagem.' It was well known that a large proportion of the publicans carried on a respectable trade, and were losers rather than gainers by drunkenness. Yet in many instances these men found themselves classed with the owners of the most disreputable gin-palaces, with persons who flourished on the viciousness and the degradation of their fellow-creatures. The natural

result of indiscriminate attack was to cause an indiscriminate alliance for the purposes of defence.

These were difficulties thickening across the path of Mr. Gladstone's Government. All the time, too, a sullen suspicion prevailed among many classes that there had been a lowering of the national pride. Many men regarded the reopening of the Treaty of Paris as a triumph for Russia at the expense of England, and the Washington Treaty as a submission of this country to the arrogance of the United States. No one undertook to say that there was anything the Government could have done other than what they did; but the world must have changed indeed, when men will cease to associate a Government with the untoward events that occur during its time, or to hold the minister who has to make the apology responsible for the humiliation which a moralist would see in the original fault, and not in the atonement.

The establishment of a republic in France could not be without its influence on English politics. A certain amount of more or less vague republican sentiment is always afloat on the surface of English radicalism. For some time before the founding of the French Republic, this vague sentiment had been undergoing a crystallising and strengthening process under the influence of two causes; the success of the North in America, and the gradual degradation of the French Empire under Napoleon III. De Tocqueville had observed long before that the great doubt he felt as to the stability of the American Republic was on the question whether it could stand

the stress of a great war. Now it had stood the stress of a great war and had come out all the stronger for the trial. Imperial France, or rather the empire imposed on France, had come for a moment into peril of collision with the American Republic, and had gone down before it without even making an effort to maintain its arrogant attitude. Facts like these naturally produced a distinct impression upon certain classes in England. The establishment of the French Republic now came as a climax. We have already spoken of the great meetings which were held in London, and in most of the English cities, to express sympathy with the struggling republic; and at some of these meetings a good deal of very outspoken republicanism made itself heard. There could be no doubt that a considerable proportion of the working men in the cities were republicans in sentiment. English writers who were not by any means of the sentimental school, but on the contrary were somewhat hard and cold in their dogmatism, began to publish articles in 'advanced' reviews and magazines, distinctly pointing out the logical superiority of the republican theory. Men were already discussing the possibility of a declared republican party being formed both in and out of Parliament. Not indeed, a party clamouring for the instant pulling down of the monarchy; no one thought of that; but a party which would avow itself republican in principle, and acknowledge that its object was to bring about such a change in public sentiment as might prepare the way for a republic in the time to come. Mr. Frederic

Harrison, a writer of ability and reputation, declared in one of the reviews that the adoption of the republican form of government by the English people at some time or other, was as certain as 'the rising of to-morrow's sun.' Of course there have always been republican sentiments among certain classes of Englishmen; and any breath of change on the Continent is sure to fan them into a little flame that flickers for a while. This time, however, many people thought that the sentiment was really going to convert itself into a principle, and that the principle might see itself represented by a political party.

France, which had given the impulse, gave also the shock that brought reaction. The wild theories, the monstrous excesses, the preposterous theatricism of the Paris Commune had a very chilling effect on the ardour of English republicans. The movement in England had, however, one or two curious episodes before it sank into quiescence.

In March 1872, Sir Charles Dilke brought on a motion, in the House of Commons, for enquiring into the manner in which the income and allowances of the Crown are expended. Sir Charles Dilke had been for some months of the preceding autumn the best abused man in Great Britain. His name appeared over and over again in the daily papers. He monopolised for weeks the first leading article in every journal. The comic papers caricatured 'Citizen Dilke' every week. In the theatrical burlesques, his name was the signal for all manner of drolleries and buffooneries. The telegraph-wires carried his

doings and speeches everywhere. American correspondents 'interviewed' him, and pictured him as the future President of England. He went round the towns of the North of England, delivering a lecture on the expenses of royalty; and his progress was marked by more or less serious riots everywhere. Life was sacrificed in more than one of these tumults. A Paris journal described his progress as a sort of civil war. The working men of London and of the North held great meetings to express their approval of his principles and conduct, and to pass resolutions in support of the young baronet who had dared to condemn the expenses of royalty, and to avow himself a republican. Many people really thought that for good or ill the vague, fluent, incoherent movement towards republicanism in England had found its leader at last—that the hour had come and the man. To increase and perplex the excitement, the Prince of Wales fell ill, and if Sir Charles Dilke had personally caused his illness he could not have been more bitterly denounced by some speakers and writers. He was represented as a monster of disloyalty, who had chosen to assail the Queen (against whom it is only fair to say he had never uttered a disparaging word) while her eldest son lay struggling with death. The Prince of Wales, given over by all the doctors, recovered; and in the outburst of public gladness and loyalty that followed his restoration to health, Sir Charles Dilke was almost forgotten. But he had been challenged to repeat in the House of Commons the statements that he had made in the

country. He answered the challenge by bringing forward the motion to enquire into the manner in which the income and allowances of the Crown were spent. There was unmistakable courage in the cool, steady way in which he rose to propose his motion. He faced his houseful of antagonists with dogged calmness. It is a hard trial to the nerves to face such an audience. Sir Charles Dilke knew that everyone in that House, save three or four alone, was bitterly opposed to him. He knew that the most overpowering eloquence was to pour out on him the moment he had finished his speech. But neither then nor after did he show the slightest sign of quailing. His speech was well got up as to facts, well arranged, and evidently well committed to memory, but it was not eloquent. The House began to grow apathetic before Sir Charles Dilke had nearly finished his address. The warmth of Mr. Gladstone's reply was almost startling by sheer force of contrast to Sir C. Dilke's quiet, dry, and laboured style. No one expected that Mr. Gladstone would be so passionately merciless as he proved to be. His vehemence, forcing the House into hot temper again, was one cause at least of the extraordinary tumult that arose when Sir C. Dilke's friend and ally, Mr. Auberon Herbert, rose to speak, and declared himself also a republican. This was the signal for as extraordinary a scene as the House of Commons has ever exhibited. The tumult became so great, that if it had taken place at any public meeting, it would have been called a riot, and would have required the interference of the

police. Some hundreds of strong, excited, furious men were shouting and yelling with the object of interrupting the speech and drowning the voice of one man. The Speaker of the House of Commons is usually an omnipotent authority. Seldom indeed does anyone presume to question his decision or to utter a word when he enjoins silence. One of the peculiarities of the House of Commons which all strangers admire, is the respect and deference it usually shows to the president whom it has itself chosen. But on this occasion the Speaker was literally powerless. 'What care these roarers for the name of king?' asks the boatswain in 'The Tempest,' as he points to the furious waves. What cared the roarers in the House of Commons for the name of Speaker? There was no authority which could overawe them. They were all men of education and position—university men, younger sons of peers, great landowners, officers in crack cavalry regiments, the very *élite*, most of them, of the English aristocracy. But they became for the moment a merely furious mob. They roared, hissed, gesticulated with the fury of a sixpenny gallery disappointed in some boxing-night performance. The shrill 'cock-crow,' unheard in the House of Commons for a whole generation, shrieked once more in the ears of the bewildered officials. Probably nobody now reads Samuel Warren's once popular novel 'Ten Thousand a Year,' but those who did read it long ago may remember that when Mr. Tittlebat Titmouse got into Parliament, his one only contribution to debate was

his admirable and distracting imitation of the crowing of a cock. Everyone supposed that Titmouse and his ways were dead and gone; but it would positively seem that some of his kith and kin were alive and in good voice that night in the House of Commons.

The debate was chiefly remarkable for the fact that it noted the exact level to which the republican sentiment had arisen in English political society. Three members of the House of Commons acknowledged, in more or less qualified terms, their theoretical preference for the republican form of government. These were Sir C. Dilke, Mr. Auberon Herbert, and Professor Fawcett. There were, doubtless, some other men in the House who sympathised with republican principles, but who, well convinced that the monarchy had hitherto suited England and was not likely to be soon changed, gave themselves no more trouble about the matter than if it were some purely speculative question. Such men could not be called republicans. The name could only be given to the few who frankly declared that they would prefer to see England a republic, and even to these it must be given only in a qualified sense. Not one of them was anxious to see any sudden change. Not one of them was even inclined to set on foot any agitation for the propagation of republican principles. The excesses of the Commune and the illness of the Prince of Wales were combining influences too strong for theory to contend against.

Nothing more was then heard of republicanism

in England. It was clear that there was no republican party, properly so called, in the country. Some of the 'philosophical Radicals,' who were most strongly republican in sentiment and conviction, declared in the most explicit words that they would not make the slightest effort to agitate in favour of a republic; that they did not think the difference between a republic and the British Constitution was worth the trouble of a long agitation. If a republic were to come, they said, it would come in good time. England could afford to wait. When this philosophical mood of mind prevailed among republicans it was clear that the question of a republic had not, as the phrase is, 'come up.' Mr. Bright expressed his opinion on the subject with his usual blunt good sense. Some one wrote to him, asking what he thought of republicanism. Mr. Bright replied that, 'as to opinions on the question of monarchy or republicanism, I hope and believe it will be a long time before we are asked to give our opinion. Our ancestors decided the matter a good while since, and I would suggest that you and I should leave any further decision to our posterity.' The whole condition of things was fairly set out in Mr. Bright's letter. There was no practical question then as to the relative advantages of monarchy and republic. If that question is to come up at some time, it had not come up then.

A new figure did, however, arise about that time in English politics. It was one less expected than even the portentous form of a cosmopolitan republican. It was that of the English agricultural labourer

as a political agitator and member of a trades union. For years and years the working man in cities had been a conspicuous personage. He had played an influential part in every agitation. Orators had pleaded for him and sought his applause ; statesmen had paid court to him ; the newspapers were always filled with him ; his trades unions were a scare to half society ; he figured in novels, in poetry, in satire ; he was positively beginning to be a sort of fourth power in the State. All the while the rural labourer was supposed to be entirely out of the play. No one troubled about him. When he appeared in the papers it was only as the subject of some horrifying paragraph about the miseries of a labourer's family, who, nine in number, had all to sleep in one room, four of the unfortunate group being afflicted with fever or small-pox. Sometimes a London newspaper sent down a special correspondent to explore the condition of some village, and he wrote back descriptions which made the flesh creep and the blood run cold. Let anyone picture to himself a poorly-fed, half-clad, and wholly ignorant family of eight or nine, including, say, two grown young men and two grown young women, who habitually slept in one room, and in not a few instances in one bed. Let him think of all this, and imagine what the worst consequences must be, and his imagination will probably have fallen short of the fearful reality. That was the rural labourer at his worst. At his best he seemed a picture of hard-working, cleanly, patient, and almost hopeless poverty. Mr. Disraeli and the Tory land-

lords said he was too contented and happy to need a change; most other people thought that he was rendered too stolid by the monotonous misery of his condition. Suddenly in the spring of 1872, not long after the opening of Parliament, vague rumours began to reach London of a movement of some kind among the labourers of South Warwickshire. It was first reported that they had asked for an increase of wages, then that they were actually forming a labourers' union, after the pattern of the artisans; then that they were on strike. There came accounts of meetings of rural labourers—meetings positively where men made speeches. Instantly the London papers sent down their special correspondents, and for weeks the movement among the agricultural labourers of South Warwickshire—the country of Shakespeare—became the sensation of London. The Geneva Arbitration, which was then giving Parliament something to talk about every night, was thrown into the shade. Even the Tichborne case, the civil part of which had just come to a close, did not divert public attention altogether from the agitation among the rural labourers. How the thing first came about is not very clear. But it seems that in one of the South Warwickshire villages was a wonderful man—a labourer who had travelled, a wanderer who had seen men and cities. This adventurous man had led a wild life; he had travelled out of his native village, away, far away, quite into the next county, and even it was reported into the county beyond that, and had seen strange and unfamiliar ways of life. He had been in the iron manu-

facturing regions, the Black Country, and he had heard about strikes, and been present at meetings of grimy working men, who talked out and made their demands as boldly as the masters themselves could do. The wanderer returned to his native village, and he told of the wonders he had seen, and perhaps found incredulous listeners. But there came a somewhat harder time than usual in South Warwickshire. The wages of eight or ten shillings a week utterly failed to keep up the family. There was sad and sullen talk of starvation. The farmers refused to give higher wages, declaring that the rents they had to pay to the great landlords would not allow them. The great landlords said they got no more than their land was worth, and that they could do nothing. Meanwhile it was evident that the farmers had plenty to eat, drink and wear, that the landlords were living rather better than most princes, and that the labourer was on the verge of starvation. The travelled man whispered in his village the one word 'Strike.' The thing took fire somehow. A few men accepted it at once. In the neighbouring village was a man who, although only a day labourer, had been long accustomed to act as a volunteer preacher of Methodism, and who by his superior intelligence, his good character, and his effective way of talking, had acquired a great influence among his fellows. This man was Joseph Arch. He was consulted and he approved of the notion. He was asked if he would get together a meeting and make a speech, and he consented. Calling a meeting of day labourers then was almost

as bold a step as proclaiming a revolution. Yet it was done somehow. There were no circulars, no placards, none of the machinery which we all associate with the getting up of a meeting. The news had to be passed on by word of mouth that a meeting was to be held and where, the incredulous had to be convinced that there was really to be a meeting, the timid had to be prevailed on to take courage and go. The meeting was held under a great chestnut tree, which thereby acquired a sort of fame. There a thousand labourers came together and were addressed by Joseph Arch. He carried them all with him. His one great idea—great and bold to them, simple and small to us—was to form a labourers' union like the trades' unions of the cities. The idea was taken up with enthusiasm. New branches were formed every day. Arch kept on holding meetings and addressing crowds. The whole movement passed, naturally and necessarily, into his hands. How completely it was a rural labourers' movement, how little help or guidance it received in its origin from other sources, how profoundly isolated from the outer and active world was its scene, may be understood from the fact that it was nearly six weeks in action before its very existence was known in London. Then the special correspondents went down to the spot, and turned a blaze of light on it. Mr. Auberon Herbert, Mr. Edward Jenkins, and other active reformers, appeared on the scene and threw themselves into the movement. Meetings were held in various villages, and Mr. Arch found himself in the constant com-

panionship of members of Parliament, leaders of political organisations, and other unwonted associates. The good sense of the sturdy labourer never forsook the leader of the movement, nor did he ever show any inclination to subordinate his enterprise to any political agitation. The danger apprehended by many, that the rural labourers would allow their organisation simply to drift in the wake of the mere political agitators, proved to be unreal. The labourers took the help of Mr. Herbert and Sir C. Dilke, and of Mr. Odger and Mr. George Potter, so far as the mere conduct of the organisation was concerned, but they did not show any inclination to allow their project to expand as yet beyond its simple and natural limits. On the other hand, it was clear that, so far as the labourers had any political sympathies, they were with Liberalism and against Toryism. This too was a little surprise for the public. Most persons had supposed that a race of beings brought up for generations under the exclusive tutorship of the landlord, the vicar, and the wives of the landlords and the vicars, would have had any political tendencies they possessed drilled and drummed into the grooves of Toryism. The shock of surprise with which the opposite idea impressed itself upon the minds of the Conservative squires found ready and angry expression. The landlords in most places declared themselves against the movement of the labourers. Some of them denounced it in unmeasured language. Mr. Disraeli at once sprang to the front as the champion of feudal aristocracy and the British country squire.

The one great delight of the author of 'Vivian Grey' when he was not engaged in Parliament, was to play at being a country squire. In Scott's 'Guy Mannering,' the attorney Gilbert Glossin, who has managed to get possession of an estate, makes it his grand ambition to pass off for a country gentleman, and once gives a beggar half-a-crown because the knowing vagrant has accosted him as 'Ellangowan,' according to the old-fashioned Scottish custom which declares it the privilege of the landlord to be addressed by the name of his estate. Mr. Disraeli seemed to have the same ambition. In birth, in nationality, in mental training, in appearance, in his instinctive way of looking at things, he was essentially a foreigner in English society. Of all classes of English society that with which by intellect, temperament, and training he might be expected to have the least sympathy, was the English landlord class. Yet it seemed that his pride was to be considered an English landlord, or rather to be mistaken for an English landlord. It used to be a remarkable sight to see Mr. Disraeli presiding on certain occasions of annual celebration when, by the bounty and subscriptions of some of the landlords, the prize of a blue coat with brass buttons was to be conferred on the venerable labourer who had for the longest number of years contrived to support the largest family without having recourse to parish relief. The dignified gravity with which Mr. Disraeli admonished and blessed the happy recipient of this noble prize; the seeming assumption that a long life of privation

and labour was well worth any true man's endurance for the glory of being publicly endued, at the age of seventy-five, with a remarkably high-collared blue swallow-tail coat, the indignant repudiation of the unworthy levity of persons in London, newspaper-writers and such like, who tried to make this ceremonial seem ridiculous; all this made up a performance, of which caricature itself could hardly exaggerate the peculiarities. Joseph Arch himself mentioned in a speech the unlucky fact that one of the fortunate rustics who had actually been rewarded with this Monthyon prize, one of the proud wearers of this singular robe of honour, had been compelled after all to seek shelter in the workhouse, where they probably would not allow him to parade in the brass-buttoned blue coat even on Sundays. However that may be, Mr. Disraeli was none the less entitled and none the less willing to constitute himself the champion of the country squires, and when the agitation became public he stood forward to vindicate and glorify the impugned state of things. Mr. Disraeli insisted that everything was as it ought to be, and that the English labourer in the Midland and Southern Counties was but another Corydon in an English Arcadia, piping for very happiness as though, like the shepherd boy in Sir Philip Sidney's tale, he could never grow old. The controversy was taken up in the House of Commons, and served, if it did nothing else, to draw all the more attention to the condition of the British labourer. An amusing little side controversy arose between Mr. Newdegate and Mr. Arch's

party. As a landlord and a Tory of the Tories, Mr. Newdegate was of course an opponent of the labourers' strike. It so happened that at one of the public meetings in London, where Joseph Arch spoke, Cardinal Manning was likewise a speaker. That was enough for Mr. Newdegate. He immediately proclaimed his discovery of a new Popish plot, and bluntly charged Mr. Arch with being a disguised emissary and agent of the Jesuits. Poor Arch, who so short a time before was only an obscure labourer with a turn for preaching methodism in a little country village, found himself acclaimed by half England as the apostle of a new social revolution, and denounced by the Tories generally as the pioneer of a lawless Jacquerie; he heard his name mentioned every day in the speeches of statesmen and the debates in Parliament; he had to defend himself against the charge of being a secret agent of the Vatican, and to disclaim any intention of conducting an agitation for the establishment of a republic.

One indirect but necessary result of the agitation was to call attention to the injustice done to the rural population when they were left unenfranchised at the time of the passing of the last Reform Bill. The injustice was strongly pressed upon the Government, and Mr. Gladstone frankly acknowledged that it would be impossible to allow things to remain long in their anomalous state. In truth when the Reform Bill was passed nobody supposed that the rural population were capable of making any use of a vote. Therefore the movement which began in Warwickshire took two

directions when the immediate effects of the partial strike were over. A permanent union of labourers was formed corresponding generally in system with the organisations of the cities. The other direction was distinctly political. The rural population through their leaders joined with the reformers of the cities for the purpose of obtaining an equal franchise in town and country; in other words for the enfranchisement of the peasantry. The emancipation of the rural labourers began under that chestnut tree where the first meeting answered the appeals of Joseph Arch. The English peasant was the newest and latest figure on the political stage of the world. He followed the Virginian negro, and he came long after the Russian serf. Unlike these however he had for his leader no greater man than one of his own class. The rough and ready peasant preacher Joseph Arch had probably little idea when he began his speech under the chestnut tree, that he was speaking the first words of a new chapter of the country's history.

A few lines ought perhaps to be spared to the Tichborne trial which has just been mentioned. A claim was suddenly made upon the Tichborne baronetcy and estates by a man who came from Australia and who announced himself as the heir to the title and the property. He declared that he was the Sir Roger Tichborne who was supposed to have gone down with the wreck of the *Bella*, sailing from Rio in South America years before. The Tichborne case is certainly one of the most remarkable instances of disputed identity on record. Just now the most

wonderful thing about it seems to be the extraordinary amount of popular sympathy and credit which 'the Claimant,' as he was called, contrived to secure. He was undoubtedly an impostor; that is, if the most overwhelming accumulation of evidence, positive and negative, could establish any fact. The person who presented himself as the long-lost Roger Tichborne bore not the slightest personal resemblance to the young man who sailed in the *Bella* and was believed to have perished with her. 'The Claimant' was indeed curiously unlike what people remembered Roger Tichborne, not only in face but in figure and in manners. A slender, delicate, somewhat feeble young man, of fair although not finished education, who had always lived in good society and showed it in his language and bearing, went down in the *Bella* or at least disappeared with her; and thirteen years afterwards there came from Australia a man of enormous bulk, ignorant to an almost inconceivable degree of ignorance, and who if he were Roger Tichborne had not only forgotten all the manners of his class but had forgotten the very names of many of those with whom he ought to have been most familiar, including the name of his own mother; and this man presented himself as the lost heir and claimed the property. If this were the whole story, it might be said that there was nothing particularly wonderful in it. A preposterous attempt was made to carry on an imposture, and it failed; such things happen every day; in this case the attempt was only a little more outrageous and ridiculous than in others. But the

really strange part of the tale is to come. Despite all the obvious arguments against the Claimant, it is certain that his story was believed by the mother of Roger Tichborne, and by a considerable number of persons of undoubted veracity and intelligence who had known Roger Tichborne in his youth. True, it seems impossible that a slender Prince Hal could in a few years grow into a Falstaff. But so much the more difficult must it surely have been for the Falstaff to persuade people that he was actually the Prince Hal. So much the more wonderful is it that he did actually succeed in persuading many into full belief in himself and his story. The man who claimed to be Roger Tichborne utterly failed to make out his claim in a Court of Law. It was shown upon the clearest evidence that he had gradually put together and built up around him a whole system of imposture. He was then put on trial for his frauds, found guilty and sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude. Yet thousands of ignorant persons, and some persons not at all ignorant, continued, and to this day continue, to believe in him. He became the figure-head of a new and grotesque agitation. His own imposture was the parent and the patron of other impostures. His story opens up a far more curious study of human credulity than that of Johanna Southcote, or that of Mary Tofts, or Perkin Warbeck, or the Cock Lane Ghost.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE FALL OF THE GREAT ADMINISTRATION.

The first few days of 1873 were marked by an event which, had it occurred four or five years before, would have filled the world with a profound sensation. Happening as it did it made comparatively little stir in the political waters. It was the death of Louis Napoleon, late Emperor of the French, at his house in Chislehurst, Kent. After his imprisonment, if it can be called so, at Wilhelmshohe, in Cassel, where he was treated as an honoured guest rather than a captive, the fallen Emperor came to England. He settled with his wife and son at Chislehurst, and lived in dignified semi-retirement. The Emperor became a sort of favourite with the public here. A reaction seemed to have set in against the dread and dislike with which he had at one time been regarded. He enjoyed a certain amount of popularity. He sometimes showed himself in public; as for example at a lecture given by Mr. Stanley, the adventurous New York 'special correspondent' who had gone out to Africa and discovered Dr. Livingstone. Louis Napoleon had for a long time been in sinking health. His life had been overwrought in every way. He had lived many lives in a compara-

tively short space of time. Most of his friends had long been expecting his death from week to week, almost from day to day. He died on January 9. The event created no great sensation. Perhaps even the news of his death was but an anti-climax after the news of his fall. For twenty years he had filled a space in the eyes of the world with which the importance of no man else could pretend to compare. His political bulk had towered up in European affairs like some huge castle dominating over a city. All the earth listened to the lightest word he spoke. For good or evil his influence and his name were potent in every corner of the globe. His nod convulsed continents. His arms glittered from the Crimea to Cochin-China, from Algeria to Mexico. A signal from him and the dominion of the Austrians over Lombardy was broken at Solferino, and a new Italy arose on the horizon of Europe. A whisper from him and Maximilian of Austria hastens across the ocean in hope to found a Mexican Empire, in reality to find a premature grave. A wave of his hand and Garibaldi is crushed at Mentana. What wonder if such a man should at one time have come to believe himself the special favourite and the spoilt child of destiny? The whole condition of things seemed changed when Louis Napoleon fell at Sedan. Some forty years of wandering, of obscurity, of futile, almost ludicrous enterprises, of exile, of imprisonment, of the world's contempt, and then twenty years of splendid success, of supreme sovereignty, had led him to this—to the disgrace of Sedan, to the quiet fading

days of Chislehurst. He had overshadowed France and Europe with 'the gloom of his glory,' and now, to borrow John Evelyn's words, 'is all in the dust.' In one of his Napoleonic ballads Beranger, speaking of the fall of the first Emperor, bitterly declares that the Kings of Europe who despise him in his exile once crawled round his throne, and still bear on their brows the traces of the dust which his footprint left when he set his conqueror's heel upon their heads. Europe had certainly at one time shown an inclination to grovel before Louis Napoleon's throne. He was regarded as a statesman of mysterious, infallible, superhuman wisdom. He was understood to be a Brutus who had for a long time professed idiotcy in order to conceal inspiration. When he fell, the world shook its wise head pityingly, and seemed inclined to fall back upon the opinion that it must have been only idiotcy trying to assume the oracular ways of inspiration. Towards the closing days there was a revival of a kindlier feeling and a fairer judgment. Louis Napoleon had in his early and obscure days lived in lodgings in King Street, St. James's, and when he became a great Emperor a tablet was set up in the outer wall of the house to inform all the world of the fact. He came to London in the zenith of his power and his fame, and he drove by the house and looked at the tablet and said something oracular and appropriate no doubt, and the newspapers chronicled the event, and the world admired. When he came back again after Sedan there was no account of his driving past the old place, if he did so. But the tablet had

not been taken down; it is only right to say that much. It was allowed to remain there even though Louis Napoleon had fallen never to hope again. Perhaps we cannot better illustrate the manner in which the English public received him on his late return. There was no further allusion to the tablet; but it was not taken down.

Death was very busy about this time with men whose names had made deep mark on history or letters. Lord Lytton, the brilliant novelist, the successful dramatist, the composer of marvellous Parliamentary speeches, died on January 18, 1873. Dr. Livingstone, the famous missionary and explorer, had hardly been discovered among the living by the enterprise and energy of Mr. Stanley when the world learned that he was dead. So many false reports of his death had been sent about at different times that the statement now was received with incredulity. The truth had to be confirmed on testimony beyond dispute before England would accept the fact that the long career of devotion to the one pursuit was over, and that Africa had had another victim. John Stuart Mill died on May 8, 1873, at his home at Avignon, where the tomb of his wife was made. 'There's a great spirit gone,' was the word of all men. A loftier and purer soul, more truly devoted to the quest of the truth, had not mingled in the worldly affairs of our time. There were clear evidences in the later writings of Mr. Mill, published after his death, that he had been turning towards a different point in quest of the truth from that on

which early training and long habit had formerly fixed his mind. His influence over the thought and the culture of his day was immense. Time has even already begun to show it in some decay; but most of Mr. Mill's writings may safely be regarded as the possession of all the future, and he has left an example of candour in investigation and fearless moral purpose in action such as might well leaven even the most thoughtless and cynical generation. A sudden accident, the stumble of a horse, brought to a close, on July 19, the career of the Bishop of Winchester, the many-sided, energetic, eloquent Samuel Wilberforce. He had tried to succeed in everything, and he went near success. He tried to know everybody and understand everybody's way of looking at every question. He was a great pulpit and Parliamentary orator, a great bishop, a wit, a scholar, an accomplished man of the world. In a different and more honourable sense than that conveyed in Dryden's famous line, he 'was everything by starts;' but he was a good man and good minister always. On the very day after the death of the Bishop of Winchester died Lord Westbury, who had been Lord Chancellor, a man of great ability, unsurpassed as a lawyer in his time, endowed with as bitter a tongue and as vitriolic a wit as ever cursed their possessor. Lord Westbury was a failure in spite of all his gifts, partly because of a certain want of moral elevation in his nature. It is only justice to his memory to say that he was in many ways the victim of the errors of some to whom his affections made him too lenient.

From one cause and another the close of his career became but a heap of ruins. The deaths of Sir Edwin Landseer, the painter, Sir Henry Holland, the famous physician and traveller, whose patients and personal friends were Emperors, Kings, Presidents, and Prime Ministers, and of Professor Sedgwick, the geologist, ought to be mentioned. Nor must we omit from our death roll the name of Dr. Lushington, who, in addition to his own personal distinction, is likely to be remembered as the depositary of a secret confided to him in an earlier generation by Lady Byron, the secret of the charge she had to make against her husband. The whole story was revived before Dr. Lushington's death by a painful controversy, but he refused even by a yes or no to reveal Lady Byron's confidence.

The year which saw so many deaths was a trying time for the Liberal Government. The session of that year would in any case have brought them over what may be called the grand climacteric of the Parliament. The novelty of the reforming administration was well-nigh worn off, and there was yet some work which Mr. Gladstone was pledged to do. Here and there, when it happened that the death or retirement of a member of Parliament gave an opportunity for a new election, it seemed of late to happen that the election went generally against the Government. The Conservatives were plucking up a spirit everywhere, and were looking closely after their organisation. Mr. Disraeli himself had taken to going round the country, doing what would be called in

America stump oratory, and doing it remarkably well. In the Crystal Palace of London, in the Free Trade Hall and the Pomona Gardens of Manchester, in the Conservative Association of Glasgow, and in other places he had addressed great assemblages and denounced and ridiculed the Liberal Government. In the Manchester Free Trade Hall he made use of a remarkably happy expression. His rivals had entered into office, he said, with a policy of violence, of sacrilege, and of confiscation, and now having done their work they sat in a row on the Treasury benches reminding him as he gazed across the table at them 'of a range of extinct volcanoes.' The Government had been unlucky in the naval department; some of their ships had met with fatal accidents; and it was complained that there was defective organisation and imperfect inspection. In one of his speeches, Mr. Disraeli had spoken of a new difficulty in Irish politics and a new form of agitation that had arisen in Ireland. The Home Rule organisation had sprung suddenly into existence.

The Home Rule agitation came, in its first organised form, mainly from the inspiration of Irish Protestants. The disestablishment of the Church had filled most of the Protestants of Ireland with hatred of Mr. Gladstone, and distrust of the Imperial Parliament and English parties. It was therefore thought by some of them that the time had come when Irishmen of all sects and parties had better trust to themselves and to their united efforts than to any English Minister, Parliament, or party. Partly in a

petulant mood, partly in despondency, partly out of genuine patriotic impulse, some of the Irish Protestants set going the movement for Home Rule. But although the actual movement came into being in that way, the desire for a native Parliament had always lived among large classes of the Irish people. Attempts were always being made to construct something like a regular organisation with such an object. The process of pacification was going on but slowly. It could only be slow in any case; the effects of centuries of bad legislation could not by any human possibility be effaced by two or three years of better government. But there were many Irishmen who, themselves patient and moderate, saw with distinctness that the feeling of disaffection, or at least of discontent, among the Irish people was not to be charmed away even by such measures as the Disestablishment of the Irish Church. They saw what English statesmen would not or could not see, that the one strong feeling in the breast of a large proportion of the population of Ireland was dislike to the rule of an English Parliament. The national sentiment, rightly or wrongly, for good or ill, had grown so powerful that it could not be overcome by mere concessions in this or that detail of legislation. These Irishmen of moderate views felt convinced that there were only two alternatives before England; either she must give back to Ireland some form of national Parliament, or she must go on putting down rebellion after rebellion, and dealing with Ireland as Russia had dealt with Poland. They therefore wel-

comed the Home Rule movement, and conscientiously believed that it would open the way to a genuine reconciliation between England and Ireland on conditions of fair copartnership. The author of this history is, for obvious reasons, not inclined to discuss here the merits of the Home Rule demand. But he desires to put it on historical record that those who were chiefly concerned in promoting that movement were filled with the conviction that the principle of Home Rule contained the solution of the great problem of government which unsolved had so long divided England and Ireland, and offered a means of complete reconciliation between the two countries.

Several Irish elections took place about the time when the Home Rule movement had been fairly started. They were fought out on the question for or against Home Rule; and the Home Rulers were successful. The leadership of the new party came almost as a matter of course into the hands of Mr. Butt, who returned to Parliament after a considerable time of exile from political life. Mr. Butt was a man of great ability, legal knowledge, and historical culture. He had begun life as a Conservative and an opponent of O'Connell. He had become one of the orators of the short-lived attempt at a Protectionist reaction in England. He was taken up by the leading Protectionists, who were themselves somewhat deficient in intellect and eloquence, and who could not induce men like Mr. Disraeli to trouble themselves any more about the lost cause. Mr. Butt was a lawyer of great skill and success in his profession; as an advocate

he had for years not a rival at the Irish bar. He had taken part in the defence of Smith O'Brien and Meagher at Clonmel, in 1848; and when the Fenian movements broke out, he undertook the defence of many Fenian prisoners. He became gradually drawn away from Conservatism and brought round to Nationalism. For some reason or other the Conservative chiefs had neglected him. There is extant a letter from a once conspicuous and clever unofficial Conservative, in which among other pieces of advice to a leader of the party, he recommends him to 'buy Butt.' The frank cynicism of the advice was a proof that the writer did not understand Mr. Butt. It is certain that Mr. Butt was not a prudent man, and that he did not manage his private affairs well. There can be no doubt that he often fell into embarrassments which might have made observers think he would have welcomed any means of extrication; but it is certain that he was politically honest even to chivalrous forgetfulness of his own most legitimate interests. Perhaps the neglect of the Conservative chiefs came from their observation of the fact that Mr. Butt was gradually passing over from their side; perhaps it was due to other and personal causes. Mr. Butt dropped entirely out of public life for a while; and when he reappeared it was as the leader of the new Home Rule movement. There was not then in Irish politics any man who could pretend to be his rival. He was a speaker at once powerful and plausible; he had a thorough knowledge of the constitutional history and the technical procedures of

Parliament, and he could talk to an Irish monster meeting with vivacity and energy. Almost in a moment a regular Home Rule party was set up in the House of Commons. Popular Irish members who had been elected previous to the organisation of the movement gave in their adhesion to it; and there was in fact a sudden revival of the constitutional movement for the satisfaction of Irish national claims which had fallen asleep after the death of O'Connell and the failure of the Young Ireland Rebellion of 1848.

The Home Rule movement unquestionably put Mr. Gladstone in a new difficulty. The press and the public men of England failed altogether at first to appreciate the strength of the demand for Home Rule. Many voices cried out that no English statesman must listen to it, not to say condescend to argue with it; it was to be simply brushed away as a nuisance; bidden like a fretful child to hold its tongue and go to sleep. Mr. Gladstone was not a man to deal with political questions in that sort of way. He showed an anxiety to understand the new agitation and its objects. He asked questions of one or two prominent Irishmen; he even answered questions civilly addressed to him; he showed a willingness at least to receive information with regard to Home Rule. In the eyes of some jealous patriots in England such conduct was in itself a tampering with the question, an encouragement of the agitation, and a conniving at the designs of wicked men who were anxious to dismember the empire. It was now certain that when Parliament met, an organised Home

Rule party would be found there; and a good many strong Conservatives and weak Liberals were inclined to hold Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy responsible for the uprise of this new agitation. There seemed to be an idea that if Irishmen got any measure of justice accorded to them they ought not to ask for anything more; and that if they were so perverse and ungrateful as to ask for more, a large part of the guilt of their ingratitude must be put to the account of the minister who had been wrongheaded enough to give them any justice at all. The prospects were on the whole growing somewhat ominous for the Liberal Government. Not only the Conservative party were plucking up a spirit, but the House of Lords had more than once made it clear that they felt themselves emboldened to deal as they thought fit with measures sent up to them from the House of Commons. When the peers begin to be firm and to assert their dignity, it may always be taken for granted that there is not much popular force at the back of the Government.

Parliament met on February 6, 1873. The Royal Speech announced that 'A measure will be submitted to you on an early day, for settling the question of university education in Ireland. It will have for its object the advancement of learning in that portion of my dominions, and will be framed with a careful regard to the rights of conscience.' On February 13, Mr. Gladstone introduced his measure. It is a remarkable illustration of the legislative energy with which the Government were even yet filled, that on the very same night, at the very same hour, two

great schemes of reform, reform that to slow and timid minds must have seemed something like revolution, were introduced into Parliament. One was the Irish University Education Bill, which Mr. Gladstone was explaining in the House of Commons; the other was a measure to abolish the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, and establish a judicial Court of Appeal in its stead. This latter measure was introduced by Lord Selborne, lately Sir Roundell Palmer, who had been raised to the office of Lord Chancellor, on the resignation of Lord Hatherley, whose eyesight was temporarily affected. Great as the change was which Lord Selborne proposed to introduce, public attention paid comparatively little heed to it at that moment. Everyone watched with eager interest the development of Mr. Gladstone's most critical scheme for the improvement of university education in Ireland. Irish university education was indeed in a very anomalous condition. Ireland had two universities: that of Dublin, which was then a distinctly Protestant institution; and the Queen's University, which was established on a strictly secular system, and which the heads of the Catholic Church had on that account condemned. In a country with a population of whom five-sixths were Catholics, there was one chartered university which would not accept the Catholic as such, and another which the Catholic as such could not accept. This is a rough but accurate description of the condition of things. The remedy one might have thought would have been obvious in an ordinary case. The Catholics themselves asked

for a chartered Catholic university. The answer made by most Englishmen was, that to grant a charter to a Catholic university would be to run the risk of lowering the national standard of education, and that to grant any State aid to a Catholic university would be to endow a sectarian institution out of the public funds. The Catholic made rejoinder that a mere speculative dread of lowering the common standard of university education, was hardly a reason why five-sixths of the population of Ireland should have no university education of that kind at all; that the University of Dublin was in essence a State-endowed institution; and that the Queen's University was founded by State money, on a principle which excluded the vast majority of Catholics from its advantages.

Mr. Gladstone's measure was a gallant and a well-meant effort to reconcile the conflicting claims. He proposed to make the University of Dublin the one central university of the country, and to make it a teaching as well as an examining body. Trinity College, the Colleges of Cork and Belfast, the existing Catholic University, a body supported wholly by private funds and which had no charter, were at once to become members of the new University. The College at Galway was to cease to exist. The theological faculty was to be taken away from Trinity College, Dublin, and handed over to the representative body of the Irish Disestablished Church. The new University was to have no chairs for theology, moral philosophy, or modern history. The governing body of

the University was to be composed in the first instance of twenty-eight ordinary members to be nominated in the Act. Vacancies were to be filled by the Crown and by co-optation alternately for ten years; after that time four members were to retire annually, one successor to be named by the Crown, one by the Council, one by the Professors, and one by the Senate. In addition to the ordinary members, the affiliated colleges would be allowed to elect one or two members of council according to the number of pupils in each college. The money to sustain the university was to come in proportionate allotments from the revenues of Trinity College, a very wealthy institution, from the consolidated fund, the fees of students, and the surplus of Irish ecclesiastical property. Trinity College and each of the other affiliated colleges would be allowed to frame schemes for their own government. Thus therefore Mr. Gladstone proposed to establish in Ireland one central university, to which existing colleges and colleges to exist hereafter might affiliate themselves, and in the governing of which they would have a share, while each college would make what laws it pleased for its own constitution, and might be denominational or undenominational as it thought fit. The legislature would give an open career and fair play to all alike; and in order to make the University equally applicable to every sect, it would not teach disputed branches of knowledge, or allow its examinations for prizes to include any of the disputed questions. The colleges could act for themselves with regard to the teaching of theology, moral philosophy,

and modern history; the central University would maintain a neutral ground so far as these subjects were concerned, and would have nothing to do with them.

This scheme looked plausible and even satisfactory for a moment. It was met that first night with something like a chorus of approval from those who spoke. But there was an ominous silence in many parts of the House; and after a while the ominous silence began to be very alarmingly broken. The more the scheme was examined the less it seemed to find favour on either side of the House. It was remarked that on the morning after the introduction of the measure, the *Daily News*, a journal which might have been expected to deal favourably with any proposal made by the Government, came out with a criticism which, although courteous and cautious, was decidedly damaging. The defects of the scheme soon became evident. The one great defect was that it satisfied nobody. It proposed to break up and fuse together three or four existing systems, and apparently without the least prospect of satisfying any of the various sects and parties to compose whose strife this great revolution was to be attempted. The English Nonconformists were indignant at the proposal to endow denominational education. The Irish Protestants complained bitterly of the breaking up of the old university system in Dublin. The Catholics declared that the measure did not in any way meet their claims for a Catholic University. The authorities of the Catholic Church in Ireland pronounced decisively

against the measure. The men who proclaimed themselves devoted to culture, sneered at the notion of a national university which professed to have nothing to do with moral philosophy or modern history. It may be remarked that Mr. Mill had already suggested that history is one of the branches of human knowledge which had best be left to private cultivation. It would certainly be difficult to get a theory of modern history in an Irish National University which would be acceptable to all the sects and parties in the country. It is idle to plead that history is the study of facts; in no chapter of history, even the simplest, are the facts so clearly defined as to show the same to all eyes. Two eminent men had just been making a study of the same events in English and Irish history; one particular set of State papers was the subject of each man's examination; on the study of the same set of papers the two men came to diametrically opposite conclusions, not merely as to inference but as to fact. Again, how would it be possible to teach that chapter of history which describes the political career of O'Connell in such a way as to be acceptable to the Ulster Orangeman and the Munster Catholic? Let us fancy the University of London having a chair for the teaching of modern history, and offering prizes for proficiency in an elucidation of the political careers of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Beaconsfield. Yet it does seem as if the difficulty in the way of teaching history from the chair of an Irish National University ought to have been a reason for not attempting under such conditions to

set up a central and sole institution of that kind. Was it, in fact, possible that there could be one Irish National University available for all sects and parties? To us it seems that this was not possible, except at such sacrifices of the educational character of the university as to make it of little worth as a permanent institution. There was great justice in the complaint that soon began to be heard from both sides of the House of Commons: 'You are spoiling several institutions, and you are not satisfying the requirements of anybody whatever.'

The agitation against the bill grew and grew. The late Professor Cairnes, then in fast failing health, inspired and guided much of that part of the opposition which condemned the measure because of the depreciating effect it would have on the character of the higher education of Ireland. The English Nonconformists were all against it. The Conservatives were against it, and it soon became evident that the Irish members of Parliament would vote as a body against it for the second reading. The crisis came on an amendment to the motion. The amendment was moved on March 3 by Mr. Bourke, brother of the late Lord Mayo. The debate, which lasted four nights, was brilliant and impassioned. Mr. Disraeli was exulting, and his exultation lent even more than usual spirit to his glittering eloquence. He taunted Mr. Gladstone with having mistaken 'the clamour of the Nonconformist for the voice of the nation.' 'You have now had four years of it,' he said. 'You have despoiled churches. You have threatened every

corporation and every endowment in the country. You have examined into everybody's affairs. You have criticised every profession and vexed every trade. No one is certain of his property, and nobody knows what duties he may have to perform to-morrow. I believe that the people of this country have had enough of the policy of confiscation.' There was, of course, extravagance in these charges, but their very extravagance suited the temper of the House, and Mr. Disraeli understood his audience and its mood.

When Mr. Gladstone rose to speak at the close of the fourth night's debate it soon became evident that he no longer counted on victory. How, indeed, could he? He was opposed and assailed from all sides. He knew that the Senate of the University of Dublin had condemned his measure as well as the Roman Catholic prelates. He had received a deputation of Irish members to announce to him frankly that they could not support him. His speech was in remarkable contrast to the jubilant tones of Mr. Disraeli's defiant and triumphant rhetoric. It was full of dignity and resolve; but it was the dignity of anticipated defeat met without shrinking and without bravado. A few sentences, in which Mr. Gladstone spoke of his severance from the Irish representatives with whom he had worked cordially and successfully on the Church and Land Bills, were full of a genuine and a noble pathos. They touched the heart of many an Irish member who felt all that Ireland owed to the great statesman, but who yet felt

conscientiously unable to say that the measure now proposed was equal to the demand of the Irish Catholics. Mr. Gladstone was the first English Prime Minister who had ever really perilled office and popularity to serve the interests of Ireland; it seemed a cruel stroke of fate which made his fall from power mainly the result of the Irish vote in the House of Commons. Such was, however, the fact. The second reading of the bill would have been carried by a large majority if the Irish members, who were unable to give it their support, could even have conscientiously refrained from voting against it. The result of the division was waited with breathless anxiety. It was what had been expected. The ministry had been defeated by a small majority; 287 voted against the second reading, 284 voted for it. By a majority of three the great Liberal administration was practically overthrown. The great minister had failed. Like the hero of Schiller's ballad, the brave swimmer had plunged once too often into the flood to bring out a prize, and he perished.

The ministry did not indeed come to an end just then. Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues resigned office, and the Queen sent for Mr. Disraeli. But Mr. Disraeli prudently declined to accept office with the existing House of Commons. He had been carefully studying the evidences of Conservative reaction, and he felt sure that the time for his party was coming. He had had bitter experience of the humiliation of a minister who tries to govern without a majority in the House of Commons. He afterwards drew an

amusing picture of his experiences in that way. He declined to accept office with the existing Parliament. Why not then, it was asked, dissolve Parliament? To that Mr. Disraeli answered, not unreasonably, that it was easy for statesmen in office to dissolve Parliament, but that it would be a very different thing for a man to have to form an administration and then immediately dissolve. He could of course form a government, he said, and dissolve in May; but then he had nothing in particular to dissolve about. The functions of an Opposition were critical; he could not pretend to have a regular policy cut and dry on which the country might be asked to pronounce an opinion at a general election. The Irish University Bill was hardly a question on which to go to the country, and besides it was not a question on which Mr. Disraeli could be expected to appeal to the constituencies, seeing that the House of Commons had decided it in a way of which he approved. The situation was curious. There were two great statesmen disputing, not for office, but how to get out of the responsibility of office. The result was that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues had to return to their places and go on as best they could. There was nothing else to be done. Mr. Disraeli would not accept responsibility just then, and with regard to the interests of his party he was acting like a prudent man.

Mr. Gladstone returned to office. He returned reluctantly; he was weary of the work; he was disappointed; he had suffered in health from the in-

cessant administrative labour to which he had always subjected himself with an unsparing and almost improvident magnanimity. He must have known that, coming back to office under such conditions, he would find his power shaken, his influence much discredited. He bent to the necessities of the time, and consented to be Prime Minister still. He helped Mr. Fawcett to carry a bill for the abolition of tests in Dublin University, as he could do no more just then for university education in Ireland.

The end was near. During the autumn some elections happening incidentally turned out against the Liberal party. The Conservatives were beginning to be openly triumphant in most places. Mr. Gladstone made some modifications in his ministry. Mr. Lowe gave up the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, in which he had been singularly unsuccessful; Mr. Bruce left the Home Office, in which he had not been much of a success. Mr. Gladstone took upon himself the offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer together, following an example set in former days by Peel and other statesmen. Mr. Lowe became Home Secretary. Mr. Bruce was raised to the Peerage as Lord Aberdare, and was made President of the Council in the room of the Marquis of Ripon, who had resigned. Mr. Childers resigned the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Mr. Bright, whose health had now been restored, came back to the Cabinet in charge of the merely nominal business of the Duchy. There could be no doubt that there were dissensions

in the Ministry. Mr. Baxter had resigned the office of Secretary of the Treasury on the ground that he could not get on with Mr. Lowe, who had not consulted him with regard to certain contracts, and had refused to take his advice. The general impression was that Mr. Childers gave up the Chancellorship of the Duchy because he considered that he had claims on the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, which Mr. Gladstone now had taken to himself. These various changes and the rumours to which they gave birth were not calculated to strengthen the public confidence. In truth, the Liberal *régime* was falling to pieces. Lord Salisbury, speaking at a Conservative banquet, expressed his conviction that the Conservatives would at least be able 'to draw the teeth and clip the claws of the Liberal Administration,' and exulted over the security obtained against revolutionary innovation by the fact that the country was likely to be governed for some time by a toothless Liberal Ministry.

Ne quisquam Ajacem possit superare, nisi Ajax. It was Mr. Gladstone himself who dealt the stroke which brought the Liberal Administration to an end. In the closing days of 1873 the Conservatives won a seat at Exeter; in the first few days of 1874 they won a seat at Stroud. Parliament had actually been summoned for February 5. On the night of January 23, an astonishing rumour began to fly through various limited circles of London politicians. Men were mysteriously beckoned away from dinner-tables, and drawing-rooms, and club-rooms. Agitated messen-

gers hurried to ministerial doors seeking for information. There was commotion in the newspaper offices; the telegraph was set in constant action. Next morning all the world read the news in the papers. Mr. Gladstone had suddenly made up his mind to dissolve Parliament, and seek for a restoration of the authority of the Liberal Government by an appeal to the people. He vindicated his decision in an address to his constituents which was unfortunately all too long for genuine popular effect. What the country understood by it was, that Mr. Gladstone did not choose to bear the humiliation of seeming to have the authority he had received in 1868 now 'sunk below the point necessary for the due defence and prosecution of the public interests;' that he proposed to obtain a new lease of authority by a popular verdict; and that if restored to power he would introduce a series of financial measures which would include the total repeal of the income tax. The country was taken utterly by surprise. Many of Mr. Gladstone's own colleagues had not known what was to be done until the announcement was actually made. The feeling all over the three kingdoms was one of almost unanimous disapproval. Mr. Gladstone's sudden resolve was openly condemned as petulant and unstatesmanlike; it was privately grumbled at on various personal grounds. To us it seems to have been impatient, imprudent, irregular, but certainly spirited and magnanimous. Impolitic it no doubt was; but it ought not to have been unpopular. It must have caused great, and at that time, superfluous in-

convenience to Liberal politicians everywhere; and we cannot wonder if they complained. But to the country in general there ought to have been something fascinating in the very quixotry of a resolve which proclaimed that the Minister disdained to remain in office one hour after he had found reason to believe that he no longer possessed the confidence of the people. It was an error indeed, but it was at least a generous error; the mistake of a sensitive and a chivalrous nature.

Mr. Gladstone had surprised the constituencies. We do not know whether the constituencies surprised Mr. Gladstone. They certainly surprised most persons, including themselves. The result of the elections was to upset completely the balance of power. In a few days the Liberal majority was gone. Mr. Gladstone fought a gallant fight himself, and addressed vast open air meetings at Blackheath with the energy of another O'Connell. But it was a hopeless fight against reaction. When the result of the polls came to be made up it was found that the Conservatives had a majority of about fifty, even on the calculation, far too favourable to the other side, which counted every Home Ruler as a Liberal. Mr. Gladstone followed the example set by Mr. Disraeli six years before, and at once resigned office. The great reforming Liberal Administration was gone. The organizing energy which had accomplished such marvels during three or four resplendent years had spent itself and was out of breath. Many causes indeed concurred to bring about the fall of the Liberal

Administration. It had committed grave faults itself; some of its members had done it serious harm. Various powerful interests were arrayed against it. But when all allowance has been made for such considerations, it will probably be seen that the most potent influence which bore down the Gladstone Government was the fact, that people in general had grown tired of doing great things, and had got into the mood of the lady described in one of Mr. Charles Reade's novels, who frankly declares that heroes are her abomination. The English constituencies had grown weary of the heroic, and would have a change.

Had the Liberal Ministers consented to remain in power a few days, a very few, longer, they would have been able to announce the satisfactory conclusion of a very unsatisfactory war. This was one of the least of all our little wars; a war from which it was simply impossible to extract anything in the way of glory, and in which the only honour could be just that which the skill of the English commander was able to secure; the honour of success won in the promptest manner and with the least possible expenditure of life. The Ashantee war arose out of a sort of misunderstanding. The Ashantees are a very fierce and warlike tribe on the Gold Coast of Africa. They were at war with England in 1824, and in one instance they won an extraordinary victory over a British force of about 1,000 men, and carried home with them as a trophy the skull of the British Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles M'Carthy. The

Ashantees were afterwards defeated, and a treaty of peace was concluded with them by the Governor of our Gold Coast Settlements, Mr. MacLean, the husband of Miss Landon, better known to literature by her initials 'L. E. L.,' a woman whose poetical gifts, not in themselves very great, combined with her unhappy story to make her at one time a celebrity in England. In 1863, as has been already told in these pages, a war was begun against the Ashantees prematurely and rashly by the Governor of the Gold Coast Settlements, and it had to be abandoned owing to the ravages done by sickness among our men. In 1872 some Dutch possessions on the Gold Coast were transferred by purchase and arrangement of other kinds to England; and this transaction ended, like most of the same nature, by entangling us in misunderstanding, quarrel, and war. The King of Ashantee claimed a tribute formerly allowed to him by the Dutch, and refused to evacuate the territory ceded to England. He attacked the Fantees, a tribe of very worthless allies of ours, and a straggling harassing war began between him and our garrisons. The great danger was that if the Ashantees obtained any considerable success, or seeming success even for a moment, all the surrounding tribes would make common cause with them. The Government therefore determined to take up the matter seriously, and send a sufficient force under an experienced and well-qualified commander with instructions to take advantage of the cool season and penetrate to the Ashantee capital, Coomassie, and there inflict a blow which

would prove that the Ashantee King could not harass the English settlers with impunity. When the choice of a commander came to be discussed, only one name, as it would seem, arose to the lips of all men. That was the name of Sir Garnet Wolseley, who had commanded the successful expedition to the Red River region in 1870. Sir Garnet Wolseley had the rare good fortune to sustain the reputation conferred upon him in advance by popular acclaim. He had a very hard task to perform. Of course he could have no difficulty in fighting the Ashantees. The weapons and the discipline of the English army put all thought of serious battle out of the question. But the King of Ashantee had a force fighting on his side far more formidable than the General January and General February on whom the Emperor Nicholas of Russia vainly relied. Wordsworth in his noble ode to Toussaint L'Ouverture tells the fallen chief to be of good heart, for he has on his side 'Powers that will work for him,' 'great allies;' and these are, he says, 'earth, air, and skies;' 'not a breathing of the common wind,' he declares, 'that will forget' to support his cause. In a literal and terrible sense the King of Ashantee had just such allies. Earth, air, and skies—the earth, the air, the skies of the Gold Coast region would at the right time work for him; not a breathing of the common wind that would forget to breathe pestilence into the ranks of his enemies. The whole campaign must be over and done within the limited range of the cooler months, or there would come into the field to do battle for the African King

allies against whom an Alexander or a Cæsar would be powerless. Sir Garnet Wolseley and those who fought under him, sailors, marines, and soldiers, did their work well. They defeated the Ashantees wherever they could get at them ; but that was a matter of course. They forced their way to Coomassie, compelled the King to come to terms, one of the conditions being the prohibition of human sacrifices, and they were able to leave the country within the appointed time. The success of the campaign was a question of days and almost of hours ; and the victory was snatched out of the very jaws of approaching sun and fever. Sir Garnet Wolseley sailed from England on September 12, 1873, and returned to Portsmouth, having accomplished all his objects, on March 21, 1874. The war was not one to be proud of ; it might easily have been avoided ; it is not certain that England was entirely in the right of the quarrel first or last ; but nothing could be more satisfactory than the ease, success, and completeness with which the campaign had been pushed through to its end.

The Gladstone Government had also had to deal with one of the periodical famines breaking out in Bengal, and if they had remained in office might have been able within a very short time to report that their efforts had been successful. Mr. Gladstone's sudden action, however, deprived them of any such opportunity. They bequeathed to their successors the announcement of a war triumphantly concluded, and a famine checked ; and they bequeathed to them

also a very handsome financial surplus. So sudden a fall from power had not up to that time been known in the modern political history of the country. To find its parallel we shall have to come down six years later still. The great Liberal Administration had fallen as suddenly as the French Empire; had disappeared like Aladdin's palace, which was erect and ablaze with light and splendour last night and is not to be seen this morning.

CHAPTER LXIII.

'CONSERVATIVE REACTION.' INSTALLED IN OFFICE.

Mr. Disraeli was not long in forming a Ministry. He reduced the number of the Cabinet in the first instance to twelve. Lord Cairns became Lord Chancellor. Lord Derby was made Foreign Secretary, an appointment which gratified sober-minded men. Lord Salisbury was entrusted with the charge of the Indian Department. This too was an appointment which gave satisfaction outside the range of the Conservative party as well as within it. During his former administration of the India Office, Lord Salisbury had shown great ability and self-command, and he had acquired a reputation for firmness of character and large and liberal views. He was now and for some time after looked upon as the most rising man and the most high-minded politician on the Conservative side. The country was pleased to see that Mr. Disraeli made no account of the differences that formerly existed between Lord Salisbury and himself; of the dislike that Lord Salisbury had evidently felt towards him at one time, and of the manner in which he had broken away from the Conservative Ministry at the time of the Reform Bill of 1867. Lord Carnarvon became Colonial Secretary. Mr.

Cross, a Lancashire lawyer, who had never been in office of any kind before, was lifted into the position of Home Secretary. Mr. Gathorne Hardy was made Secretary for War, and Mr. Ward Hunt First Lord of the Admiralty. Sir Stafford Northcote, who had been trained to finance by Mr. Gladstone, accepted the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Duke of Richmond as Lord President of the Council made a safe, inoffensive, and respectable leader of the Government in the House of Lords.

The Liberals seemed to have received a stunning blow. The whole party reeled under it, and did not appear capable for the moment of rallying against the shock. Nothing could be more disheartening than the appearance of the front opposition benches during a great part of the session. To accumulate the difficulties, Mr. Gladstone suddenly announced his intention of retiring from the position of leader of the Liberal party. In a letter to Lord Granville, dated March 12, 1874, he explained that 'for a variety of reasons personal to myself,' he 'could not contemplate any unlimited extension of active political service,' and that it might be necessary 'to divest myself of all the responsibilities of leadership at no distant time.' For the present he held the rank of leader only in a sort of conditional way, and he had frankly announced to Lord Granville that he could not give 'more than an occasional attendance in the House of Commons' during that session. This seemed the one step needed to complete the disorganisation of the party. There were many complaints, not loud

but deep, of the course taken by Mr. Gladstone. It was contrasted openly as well as secretly with the perseverance, the unwearying patience, which Mr. Disraeli had shown in keeping his place at the head of his party during long years of what must often have seemed hopeless struggle. Mr. Gladstone pleaded his advancing years; but it was asked, are not the years of Mr. Disraeli still further advanced? Who brought us, some discontented Liberals asked, into all this difficulty? Who but the man who now deserts us in the face of the enemy?

The Opposition were for a while apparently not only without a leader but even without a policy, or a motive for existence. For a while it seemed as if, to adopt the correct and concise description given by Mr. Clayden in his 'England under Lord Beaconsfield,' 'the Opposition had nothing to oppose.' The Ministry had succeeded to a handsome surplus of nearly six millions. It would be hardly possible under such circumstances to bring in a budget which should be wholly unsatisfactory. Mr. Ward Hunt contrived indeed to get up a momentary scare about the condition of the navy. When introducing the Navy Estimates he talked in tones of ominous warning about his determination not to have a fleet on paper, or to put up with phantom ships. The words sent a wild thrill of alarm through the country. The sudden impression prevailed that Mr. Hunt had made a fearful discovery—had found out that the country had really no navy; that he would be compelled to set about constructing one out of hand. The whole of

the surplus at least, people said, would have to be given up to make a beginning ; nor did men forget to point to the cheerful possibility of some foreign enemy taking advantage of the opportunity to assail England's unprotected coasts. Mr. Ward Hunt, however, when pressed for an explanation, explained that he really meant nothing. It appeared that he had only been expressing his disapproval on abstract grounds of the maintenance of inefficient navies, and never meant to convey the idea that England's navy was not efficient. The country breathed again ; the surplus seemed safe, and the coasts. The idea of Germany or Russia coming down upon defenceless England, like Achilles on the unarmed Hector in 'Troilus and Cressida,' passed away.

Two new measures belonging to the same order disturbed for a while what Sir Wilfrid Lawson jocularly called 'the almost holy calm' which prevailed in Parliament now that the Conservatives had it all their own way, and the Liberals were crushed. One was the Bill for the abolition of Church Patronage in Scotland ; the other, the Public Worship Bill for England. The Church Patronage Bill, which was introduced by the Government, is well described by Mr. Clayden as 'a Liberal measure which had become a reactionary scheme by being brought into the world a generation behind its time.' It took away the appointment of ministers in the Church of Scotland from lay patrons, but only to give it to the male communicants of the parish kirk, not to the whole body of the parishioners. The patronage system was

the cause of that great secession from the Church of Scotland under Dr. Chalmers which has been described in an early chapter of this history. Such a measure as that now introduced by the Government, or at least, a measure having such a general purpose, would have prevented the secession in 1843; but it was useless for any purpose of reconciliation in 1874. Moreover, the measure of 1874, by confining the power of appointment to the actual communicants of each church, took away the national character of the Church of Scotland, and converted it into a sectarian organisation. In a historical sense, the passing of the measure can have little importance unless as it may have given an impulse to the question of disestablishment in Scotland. Its introduction became of some present interest to the House of Commons, because it drew Mr. Gladstone into debate for the first time since the opening nights of the session. He opposed the Bill, but of course in vain. Mr. Disraeli complimented him on his reappearance, and kindly expressed a hope that he would favour the House with his presence as often as possible; indeed was quite friendly and patronising to his fallen rival.

The Bill for the Regulation of Public Worship was not a Government measure. It was introduced into the House of Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and into the House of Commons by Mr. Russell Gurney. It was strongly disliked and publicly condemned by some members of the Cabinet; but after it had gone its way fairly towards success

Mr. Disraeli showed a disposition to adopt it, and even to speak as if he had had the responsibility of it from the first. Once or twice it would almost seem as if he had forgotten that it was not a measure of his own proposing. The bill illustrated a curious difficulty into which the Church of England had been brought, in consequence partly of its connection with the State. We have already traced in these volumes the history of the Oxford movement which was intended to quicken the State Church with new life and freshness, and which before long sent some of the greatest divines of that Church into the ranks of the Church of Rome. The influence of the movement made itself felt in other ways as well. It set thought stirring everywhere within the Church. It appealed to much that was philosophical, much that was artistic and æsthetic, and at the same time to much that was sceptical. One body of Churchmen were anxious to maintain the unity of the Christian Church, and would not admit that the Church of England began to exist with the Reformation. They claimed apostolical succession for their bishops; they declared that the clergymen of the Church of England were priests in the true spiritual sense. Thus the Tractarians, as they were called for a time, were thrown into direct antagonism with the Evangelicals. The latter maintained that the Bible was the sole authority; the former held that the New Testament derived its authority from the Church. The Tractarians therefore claimed a right to examine very freely into the meaning of doubtful passages in the Scrip-

tures, and insisted that if the authority of the Church were recognised as that of the Heaven-appointed interpreter, all difficulty about the reconciliation of the scriptural writings with the discoveries of modern science would necessarily disappear. The Tractarian party—we call them by that name now merely as a means of distinguishing them from their opponents, and not with the intention of suggesting that it properly describes them or applies at all to some of them —became divided into two sections. One section inclined towards what may almost be called free thought; the other, to the sentiments and the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church. The State was frequently called upon to interfere. Here the world saw the prosecution of some clergyman for having published an essay supposed to teach infidel doctrine; there the Ecclesiastical courts were engaged in trying to find out whether the Church law had been broken by Ritualistic practices in some Protestant temple. The taste for beauty in decoration which was growing up in English society everywhere had already made its influence felt in the English Church. Clergymen and congregations loved to have their churches adorned like those of the Catholics; they delighted in the sweet and noble music, the incense, the painted windows, the devotional effigies and symbols, the impressive and gorgeous ritual. The astonished Evangelists saw with dismay that the Church as they knew it seemed likely to be torn asunder. On the one side was the philosophical clergyman writing his essay to show that a literal

interpretation of certain parts of the Bible was absurd; on the other, there was the High Church priest setting up his altar, swinging his censer, making his genuflexions, and even establishing his confessional. The Evangelicals had their strongest supporters among the middle and lower-middle classes; the others found favour at once among the rich who went in for culture, and among the very poor.

The law, which was often invoked, proved impotent to deal with the difficulty. It could not punish the clergymen who contributed to the volume called 'Essays and Reviews.' It could not prevent the author of the first essay in that volume from being made a bishop. It could not remove Dr. Colenso from his Colonial bishopric. One clergyman was, in 1871, 'deprived for heresy.' He forthwith started a religion of his own, or at least found a place of worship after his own way of thinking and worshippers to fill it. But it would seem as if he might as well have been allowed to remain in the ranks of the clergy of the Church as many others whom the law failed to reach, or might as well have refused to go out as others had done. It was found impossible to put down Ritualism by law. In some places the Ritualistic practices led to grave scandal and serious riots. It happened occasionally that although the clergyman and the congregation liked the elaborate and ornate worship, their neighbours all around disapproved of it. In some instances the neighbours got into the way of crowding into the church and endeavouring to put down Ritualism by

noise and even by violence. All this was becoming scandalous to the eyes of sober people. Many who were otherwise little disposed to approve of the dictatorship of the State in matters of religion, and who did not see how any decision of a court could prove a religious dogma to be right or wrong, were nevertheless inclined to demand that so long as the Church of England was a State institution the authority of the State should be upheld. They took very clear and simple ground. They said: 'The State upholds the English Church on certain conditions and to preach certain doctrines. No man is compelled to preach the doctrines if he does not feel equal in conscience to the task; but if he cannot teach them he can go out of the State Church. We do not take it on us to condemn his opinions; we do not want the law to punish him for holding them. But we say the State employs him to teach one thing and he is teaching another. We employ a man to teach German, and we find he is teaching French. We do not say that he is a wicked person because he teaches French; we only say that we want to have German taught, and that if he cannot do so he must give his place to some one who can.' On the other hand, the Ritualists said: 'You tell us that we are bound by the State-made law. We say we are only bound by the doctrines of the Church. But if we are to be bound by the law, show us first that we have broken the law. Appeal to your courts of law; do your best. We say the decision has not yet gone against us.' It was not easy to answer this practical argument. The

law was not by any means so clear as some of the opponents of Ritualism would have wished it. Moreover, even in cases where a distinct condemnation was obtained from a court of law there was often no way of putting it into execution. A Ritualistic clergyman was ordered to be suspended from his ministrations. He went on with his duties at his church just the same as ever. His congregation supported him, and the practices for which he had been condemned were carried on every Sunday without the slightest modification or interruption. In more than one case a clergyman was actually deposed by authority, and his successor appointed. The congregation held fast by the delinquent and would not admit the new man. The offender remained at his post just as if nothing had happened. It was clear that if all this went on much longer the Establishment must come to an end. One party would renounce State control in order to get freedom ; another would repudiate State control because it proved unable to maintain authority. The state of things might be likened to that which prevailed in America for some years before the civil war. There were two irreconcilable parties ; if one did not soon secede the other must.

To remedy all this disorder, the Archbishop of Canterbury brought in his Bill for the better regulation of public worship. The object of the Bill was to give offended parishioners a ready way of invoking the authority of the bishop and to enable the bishop to prohibit by his own mandate any practices

which he considered improper, or else to submit the question to the decision of a judge specially appointed to decide in such cases. The discussions were chiefly remarkable for the divisions of opinion they showed on both sides of the House. Lord Salisbury opposed the Bill in the House of Lords; Mr. Hardy condemned it in the House of Commons. It was condemned as too weak; it was denounced as too strong. Mr. Gladstone came forward with all the energy of his best days to oppose it, on the ground that it threatened to deprive the Church of all her spiritual freedom merely to get a more easy way of dealing with the practices of a few eccentric men. Sir William Harcourt, who had been Solicitor-General under Mr. Gladstone, rushed to the defence of the Bill, attacked Mr. Gladstone vehemently, called upon Mr. Disraeli to prove himself the leader of the English people, and in impassioned sentences reminded him that he had put his hand to the plough and must not draw it back. Mr. Gladstone dealt with his late subordinate in a few sentences of good-humoured contempt, in which he expressed his special surprise at the sudden and portentous display of erudition which Sir William Harcourt had poured out upon the House. Sir William Harcourt was even then a distinctly rising man. He was an effective and somewhat overbearing speaker, with a special aptitude for the kind of elementary argument and the knock-down personalities which the House of Commons can never fail to understand. The House liked to listen to him. He had a loud voice, and

never gave his hearers the trouble of having to strain their ears or their attention to follow him. His arguments were never subtle enough to puzzle the simplest country gentleman for one moment. His quotations had no distracting novelty about them, but fell on the ear with a familiar and friendly sound. His jokes were unmistakable in their meaning ; his whole style was good strong black and white. He could get up a case admirably. He astonished the House, and must probably even have astonished himself by the vast amount of ecclesiastical knowledge which with only the preparation of a day or two he was able to bring to bear upon the most abstruse or perplexed questions of Church government. He had the advantage of being sure of everything. He poured out his eloquence and his learning on the most difficult ecclesiastical questions with the resolute assurance of one who had given a life to the study. Perhaps we ought rather to say that he showed the resolute assurance which only belongs to one who has not given much of his life to the study of the subject. Probably when Sir William Harcourt had forgotten all that he had read up a little time before concerning Church history, and turned back to his remarkable speeches on the Public Worship Bill, he was as much amazed as Arthur Pendennis looking over one of his old reviews and wondering where on earth he contrived to get the erudition of which he had made such a display.

Mr. Disraeli responded so far to Sir William Harcourt's stirring appeal as to make himself the patron

of the Bill, and the leader of the movement in its favour. Mr. Disraeli saw that by far the greater body of English public opinion out of doors was against the Ritualists, and that for the moment public opinion accepted the whole controversy as a dispute for or against Ritualism. The course taken by the Prime Minister further enlivened the debates by bringing about a keen little passage of arms between him and Lord Salisbury, whom Mr. Disraeli described as a great master of jibes and flouts and jeers. All this was as good as a play to the unconcerned public. Nothing could be more lively and entertaining. People in general soon forgot all about the Bill itself, and even about the Ritualists, in the interest which was awakened by the splitting up of political parties, the attacks of friend on friend, and the cheerful sallies of Cabinet Minister against Cabinet Minister. Mr. Gladstone brought forward a series of resolutions in the form of amendments defining his objections to the measure, but he forebore to press them to a division. The Bill was passed in both Houses of Parliament and obtained the Royal assent almost at the end of the session. Nothing in particular has come of it thus far, except law suits which it seems impossible to bring to any practical conclusion. The new judge and the strengthening authority have tried their hands more than once against refractory clergymen, and with no better effect than to prove that the refractory clergyman may still bid defiance to his superiors and the law. Ritualism was not put down. Doubtless it appealed to certain instincts in many

hearts which the colder and less ornate ceremonial of the ordinary Church of England service failed to satisfy. The interference of the law seemed to have the effect common in such cases. It made the followers of some Ritualistic clergymen regard their leader not merely as an apostle but as a martyr. In some instances it exalted commonplace men into the worshipped of congregations and the idol of emotional women. In some instances it put good and pious men at the mercy of fussy and ignorant alarmists. On the whole it promoted rather than suppressed Ritualism.

One useful piece of legislation, or perhaps we ought rather to say the first step in a new course of useful legislation, was forced upon the Government by Mr. Plimsoll. This was a measure for the protection of seamen against the danger of being sent to sea in vessels unfit for the voyage. Mr. Plimsoll was a man who had pushed his way through life by ability and hard work into independence and wealth. He was full of human sympathy, and was especially interested in the welfare of the poor. His impassioned temperament made him apt to be eaten up by the zeal of his cause; he had many of the enthusiast's characteristic defects, but he was filled with the best qualities of a genuine enthusiasm. Mr. Plimsoll's attention happened to be turned to the condition of our merchant seamen, and he found that the state of the law left them almost absolutely at the mercy of the shipowner. The system which prevailed with regard to maritime insurances put a

great temptation in the way of unscrupulous and selfish shipowners. It was easy to insure a vessel, and once insured it mattered little to such a shipowner how soon she went to the bottom. The law dealt in very arbitrary fashion with the seaman who for any reason refused to fulfil his contract and go to sea. It gave to magistrates the power of sending him at once to the common prison. The poor seaman often made his contract with utter thoughtlessness, and when once he made it he was bound to it. The criminal law bore upon him; only the civil law applied to the employer. Mr. Plimsoll was convinced that a great many lives were lost by the unprincipled conduct of certain shipowners who sent men out in rotten but well-insured vessels, and left them to their fate. He actually found cases of seamen sentenced to prison because they refused to sail in crazy ships, which, when they put to sea, never touched a port but went down in mid ocean. Letters were found in the pockets of drowned seamen which showed that they had made their friends aware of their forebodings as to the condition of the vessel that was to be their coffin. All this stirred Mr. Plimsoll's blood to such a degree that he could not endure it. He began a regular crusade against certain shipowners. He published a book called, 'Our Seamen, an Appeal,' in which he made the most startling and it must be added the most sweeping charges. Courts of law were invoked to deal with his assertions; the authority of Parliament was called on to protect shipowning members against the violence of the irrepressible

philanthropist. The public had not much difficulty in understanding Mr. Plimsoll. They saw at once that he was a man likely enough to be betrayed into exaggeration, sometimes into very serious mistake: but that his purpose was genuine, that his cause was good, and that on the whole the case he made out was one calling for the instant attention of Parliament. He was clearly wrong in some of his charges against individuals, but a very general opinion prevailed that he was only too just in his condemnation of the system. Mr. Plimsoll brought in a Bill for the better protection of the lives of seamen. It was a stringent measure. It proposed a compulsory survey of all ships before leaving port, various precautions against overloading, the restriction of deck-loading, and the compulsory painting of a load line, the position of which was to be determined by legislation. This measure was strongly opposed by the shipowners in the House, and by many others as well as they, who regarded it as too stringent, and who also feared, that by putting too much responsibility on the Government it would take all responsibility off the shipowners. The Bill came to the test of a division on June 24, 1874, and was rejected by a majority of only three, 170 voting for it, and 173 against. The Government then recognising the importance of the subject, and the strong feeling which prevailed in the country with regard to it, undertook to bring in a Merchant Shipping Bill of their own. They introduced the Bill in the session of 1875. It did not go nearly so far as Mr. Plimsoll

would have desired, but it did promise to be at least part of a series of legislation which further developed might have accomplished the object. Such as it was, however, the Government did not press it, and towards the end of July Mr. Disraeli announced that they would not go further that year with the measure.

The 22nd of July saw one of the most extraordinary scenes that ever took place in the House of Commons. Mr. Plimsoll, under the influence of disappointment and of anger, seemed to have lost all self-control. He denounced some of the shipowners of that House; he threatened to name and expose them; he called them villains who had sent brave men to death. When interrupted by the Speaker, and told that he must not apply the term villains to members of the House, he repeated again and again, and in the most vociferous tones, that they were villains, and that he would abide by his words. He refused to recognise the authority of the Speaker. He shouted, shook his fist at the leading members of the Government, and rushed out of the House in a state of excitement that seemed little less than that of an actual maniac. Thereupon Mr. Disraeli moved, 'that the Speaker do reprimand Mr. Plimsoll for his disorderly behaviour.' Mr. A. M. Sullivan, one of the Home Rule members, returned for the first time at the general election, a man of remarkable eloquence and of high character, rushed into the House pallid and almost breathless with excitement, and endeavoured to interpose on behalf of Mr. Plimsoll. He pleaded that Mr. Plimsoll was seriously ill and hardly

able to account for his actions owing to mental excitement arising from an overwrought system, and from the intensity of his zeal in the cause of the merchant seamen. He asked that a week should be given Mr. Plimsoll to consider his position. Mr. Fawcett and other members made a similar appeal, and the Government consented to postpone a decision of the question for a week. Mr. Plimsoll had offended against the rules, the traditions, and the dignity of the House, and many even of those who sympathised with his general purpose thought he had damaged his cause and ruined his individual position. Nothing, however, could be more extraordinary and unexpected than the result. It was one of those occasions in which the public out of doors showed that they could get to the real heart of a question more quickly and more clearly than Parliament itself. Out of doors it was thoroughly understood that Mr. Plimsoll's behaviour in the House of Commons was a gross offence against order. It was thoroughly understood that he was too sweeping in his charges; that he was entirely mistaken in some of them; that he had denounced men who did not deserve denunciation; that he had surrounded a good cause with an unfortunate adornment of exaggeration, extravagance, and ill-temper. All this the public understood and admitted. But the difference between the public and the House of Commons was, that while understanding and admitting all this the public clearly saw that as to the main question at issue Mr. Plimsoll was entirely in the right. They saw that, making allow-

ance for all exaggeration and all ebullitions of temper, Mr. Plimsoll was the first man to take a just view of the hardships inflicted on merchant seamen; and that the heart of his case, if we may use that expression, was sound. The country was therefore determined to stand by him.

Great meetings were held all over England during the next few days, at every one of which those who were present pledged themselves to assist Mr. Plimsoll in his general object and policy. The result was that when Mr. Plimsoll appeared in the House of Commons the week after, and in a very full and handsome manner made apology for his offences against Parliamentary order, it was apparent to everyone in the House and out of it that he was master of the situation, and that the Government would have to advance with more or less rapid strides along the path where he was leading. Finally, the Government brought in, and forcibly pushed through, a Merchant Shipping Bill, which met for the moment some of the difficulties of the case and which they promised to supplement afterwards by a complete scheme of legislation. Mr. Disraeli indeed went so far as quietly to claim for himself and for the Government some of the merit of having caused the extraordinary scene in the House of Commons. He suggested that the Government were perfectly aware that nothing could be done until the temper of the country was thoroughly roused, and therefore implied, if he did not actually affirm, that it was partly by their design that Mr. Plimsoll was stirred to his extraordinary demonstra-

tion, and the assistance of the public thereby obtained for the passing of a strong measure. 'Even if one does call them names,' said Mrs. Gamp, vindicating her treatment of her patients, 'it's only done to rouse them.'

The measure did not prove to be a very strong one, but it did something towards Mr. Plimsoll's object. The Government afterwards promised to supplement it by legislation, regulating in some way the system of maritime insurances, which they justly declared to be essential to any satisfactory and final settlement of the question. It is clear that so long as the existing system of maritime insurance was allowed to prevail, the temptation to unscrupulous shipowners would continue to be almost irresistible, and that no legislation merely applying to the fabric of the ship could properly secure the lives of the seamen. Other things, however, interfered with the carrying out of the Government proposals, such as they were. The regulation of maritime insurance was forgotten. Mr. Disraeli's colleagues soon had too many questions of imperial interest on their hands in all parts of the world to have time or inclination for business of so homely a nature as a measure for the protection of the lives of English merchant seamen. Nothing further was done during the reign of the Conservative Ministry to complete the scheme which they had promised in the beginning, and many sessions after the House saw another outburst of passion on the part of Mr. Plimsoll, another attempt of the Government to put him to censure, and another distinct declaration on

the part of the country, that however Mr. Plimsoll might have offended against the rules of the House, his spirit and purpose were thoroughly in unison with the feelings of the public.

The Government seemed for a while, however, inclined to keep plodding steadily on with quiet schemes of domestic legislation. These were not usually very comprehensive or drastic schemes. They were rather of the kind which ill-natured critics would describe as tinkering. The Government tinkered at a measure for the security of improvements made by agricultural tenants. They made it purely permissive, and therefore thoroughly worthless. This one defect tainted many of their schemes of domestic reform; this inclination to make every reform permissive. It seemed to be thought a clever stroke of management to introduce a measure professedly for the removal of some inequality or other grievance, and then to make it permissive and allow all parties concerned to contract themselves out of it. Thus it was said in effect to the agricultural tenant: 'Behold, here is a Bill to enable you to hold fast the fruits of your expenditure and your labour;' and to the landlord: 'You have no cause to be alarmed; for you see this is only a permissive bill, and you can contract yourself out of it if your tenants agree, and of course they must agree.' Mr. Cross, the Home Secretary, however, proved a very efficient Minister, and introduced many useful schemes of legislation, among the rest an Artizans' Dwelling Bill, the object of which was to enable local authorities to pull down

houses unfit for human habitation and rebuild on the sites. The Government made experiments in reaction here and there. They restored the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, which had seemed actually doomed. They got into some trouble by issuing a circular to captains of war vessels on the subject of the reception of slaves on board their ships. The principle which the circular laid down was in substance a full recognition of the rights of a slave-owner over a fugitive slave. The country rose in indignation against this monstrous reversal of England's time-honoured policy; and the circular was withdrawn and a new one issued. This too proved unsatisfactory. The Government made excuse by pleading that something of the same kind had been done before under a Liberal Administration, and attempted to satisfy public feeling by declaring that a slave was not to be handed back if the slave's life would be endangered by the withdrawal of the shelter of the English flag. Thereupon it was at once asked, Is a woman slave to be handed back to a ravisher? The Government became entangled in a whole network of contradictions and difficulties, and after having tried various expedients, appointed commissions, and made other futile efforts to get out of the trouble, they had at length to allow the old principle to re-assert itself, and the flag of England, whether it floats on sea or land, to be a protection and a shelter for the slave. Of course it is not intended that English vessels of war shall hold out invitations to fugitive slaves or act as the propagandist agents of the prin-

ciples of personal freedom. But the broad plain principle long established was, that when a slave does get on board an English vessel, just as when he touches British soil, he is free and is not to be restored to slavery; and that principle the Government saw themselves at last compelled to re-affirm. It was impossible for them to resist the popular demand; some of their own men in the House of Commons fell away from them and insisted that the old principle must be kept up, and that the slave-owner shall not take his slave from under the shadow of the English flag.

All this time what was Mr. Gladstone doing? He appeared to have withdrawn from the paths of Parliamentary life and almost from the political world. He was very busy indeed in another way. He had taken to polemical literature. He was writing a series of essays to prove that the doctrine of papal infallibility if strictly acknowledged by Catholics would place their allegiance to whatever Sovereign entirely at the disposal of the Pope. He was stirring up a heated controversy by endeavouring to prove that absolute obedience to the Catholic Church was henceforward inconsistent with the principles of freedom, and that the Papal doctrine was everywhere the enemy of liberty. Cardinal Manning, Dr. Newman, and other great controversialists had taken the field against Mr. Gladstone, and the argument went on for a considerable time without abatement of eagerness. Grave politicians were not a little scandalised at the position taken by a statesman who only the other

day was Prime Minister. There seemed something curiously undignified and unseemly in Mr. Gladstone's leading a theological controversy. A speaker at an Evangelical Meeting in Exeter Hall would have been quite in his place when using such arguments as those employed by Mr. Gladstone; but a sharp polemical controversy provoked by a great statesman was something new in the modern world. One conclusion was adopted everywhere. It seemed clear that Mr. Gladstone never meant to take any leading part in politics again. Surely, it was said, if he had the remotest idea of entering the political field anew, he never would have thus gratuitously assailed the religious belief of the Roman Catholic subjects of the Queen. Nor indeed did it appear as if it would be very suitable for England to have a statesman in office again who must have given offence to all the Catholic Sovereigns and Ministers of Europe. Unfriendly critics hinted that Mr. Gladstone was writing against the Pope and the Vatican in order to wreak his grudge because of the condemnation of his Irish University Bill by the heads of the Catholic Church in Ireland. It is not probable that any personal motive influenced Mr. Gladstone in a course which all his true admirers of whatever political party must have been sorry to see him follow. He had always a keen relish for theological disputation. He had in him much of the taste and the temper of the ecclesiastic. A religious controversy came to him as the most natural sort of recreation after the fatigue and disappointments of the political arena. Carteret,

driven from office, 'retired laughing,' says Macaulay, 'to his books and his bottle.' Fox found relief from political work in his loved Greek authors. Talleyrand played whist. Mr. Gladstone sought relaxation in religious controversy. He was as eager about it as ever he had been about a Budget or a Reform Bill. He assailed the Pope as if he were attacking Mr. Disraeli. He declared against the Vatican as if he were overwhelming the Tory Opposition with his rhetoric. There was an earnestness about him which made some men smile and others feel sad. Most of his friends shook their heads; most of his enemies were delighted. Out of this depth it seemed impossible that he could ever rise. Mr. Disraeli had once said, 'there was a Palmerston.' Did he feel tempted now to say 'there was a Gladstone'?

In the beginning of 1875, Mr. Gladstone had formally retired from the office of leader of the Liberal party in the House of Commons. There was some difficulty at first about the choice of his successor. Two men stood intellectually high above all other possible competitors—Mr. Bright and Mr. Lowe. But it was well known that Mr. Bright's health would not allow him to undertake such laborious duties, and Mr. Lowe was quietly assumed to have none of the leader's qualities. Sir William Harcourt had not weight enough; neither had Mr. Goschen; the time of these two men had apparently not yet come. The real choice was between Mr. Forster and Lord Hartington. Mr. Forster, however, knew that he had estranged the Nonconformists from him by the course

he had taken in his education measures, and he withdrew from what he felt to be an untenable position. Lord Hartington was therefore arrived at by a sort of process of exhaustion. It is not too much to say that had he not been the son of a great Whig duke no human being would ever have thought of him as leader of the Liberal party. But it is only right to add that he proved much better than his promise. He had a robust straightforward nature, and by constant practice he made himself an effective debater. Men liked the courage and the candid admission of his own deficiencies, with which he braced himself up to his most difficult task—to take the place of Gladstone in debate and to confront Disraeli.

CHAPTER LXIV.

THE EASTERN QUESTION AGAIN.

A CHANGE soon came over the spirit of the Administration. It began to be seen more and more clearly that Mr. Disraeli had not come into office merely to consider the claims of agricultural tenants and to pass measures for the pulling down of what Mr. Cross, the Home Secretary, called 'rookeries' in the back slums of great cities. The Prime Minister was well known to cherish loftier ambitions. He was not supposed to have any warm personal interest in prosaic measures of domestic legislation. If a great Reform Bill were brought forward he could fight against it first, and adopt it and enlarge it afterwards. If any question of picturesque theology were under discussion he was the man to sustain religion with epigram, and array himself on the side of the angels in panoply of paradox. But his inclinations were all for the broader and more brilliant fields of foreign politics. The poetic young notary in Richter's story was found with his eyes among the stars and his soul in the blue ether. Mr. Disraeli's eyes were among the stars of imperialist ambition; his soul was in the blue ether of high policy. Since his early years he had not travelled. He had hardly ever left Eng-

land even for a few days. He knew personally next to nothing of any foreign country. Perhaps for this very reason foreign affairs had all the more magical fascination for him. The prosaic dulness of Downing Street may have sent his fancy straying over the regions of Alexander's conquests; the shortness of the daily walks between the Treasury and the House of Commons may have filled him with dreams of far-extended frontiers and a new Empire of the East.

The marked contrast between the political aptitudes and tastes of Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone came in to influence still further the difference between the policy of the new Government and that of its predecessor. Mr. Gladstone delighted in the actual work and business of administration. As Dr. Johnson could grapple with whole libraries so Mr. Gladstone could grapple with whole budgets. He could assimilate almost in a moment vast masses of figures which other men would have found bewildering even to look at. He could get into his mind almost in a flash all the details of the most intricate piece of legislation. During the long, involved and complicated discussions of the Irish Church Bill and the Irish Land Bill, he had conducted the controversy chiefly himself, and argued the legal details of perplexed clauses with lawyers like Cairns and Ball and Butt. He could indeed do anything but rest. Now Mr. Disraeli had neither taste nor aptitude for the details of administration. He could not keep his mind to the dry details of a Bill. He could not construct a complicated measure, nor could he even argue it

clause by clause when other men had constructed it for him and explained it to him. He enjoyed administration on the large scale; he loved political debate; he liked to make a great speech. But when he was not engaged in his favourite work he preferred to be doing nothing. It was natural therefore that Mr. Gladstone's Administration should be one of practical work; that it should introduce Bills to deal with perplexed and complicated grievances; that it should take care to keep the finances of the country in good condition. Mr. Disraeli had no personal interest in such things. He loved to feed his mind on gorgeous imperial fancies. It pleased him to think that England was, what he would persist in calling her, an Asiatic Power, and that he was administering the affairs of a great Oriental Empire. He was fond of legislation on a vague and liberal scale; legislation which gave opportunity for swelling praise and exalted rhetoric. It was not without justice that his opponents constantly insisted that he was not an Englishman but a foreigner, a descendant of an Oriental race. There was indeed something singularly narrow and ungenerous in the constant taunts thrown out against Mr. Disraeli on the score of his Jewish ancestry. Every one who was at all within the limits of the actual political world knew that these taunts came from Mr. Disraeli's political supporters as well as from his political opponents. Every discontented Conservative was ready to whisper something about his chief's Jewish descent. But although there was an inexcusable want of generosity in thus making Mr. Disraeli's

extraction and ancestral faith a source of objection, it must be owned that as a matter of historical fact his foreign extraction has had a very distinct influence on his political tendencies and his ministerial career. Mr. Disraeli had never until now had an opportunity of showing what his own style of statesmanship would be. He had always been in office only, but not in power. Now he had for the first time a strong majority behind him. He could do as he liked. He had the full confidence of the Sovereign. His party were now wholly devoted to him. They could not but know that it was he whose patience and sagacity had kept them together and had organised victory for them. They began to regard him as infallible. A great many on the other side admired him as much as they disliked his policy, and believed in his profound sagacity as devoutly as any of his most humble followers. He had come to occupy in the eyes of Englishmen of all parties something of the position once accorded to Napoleon III. by the public opinion of Europe. Even those who detested still feared; men believed in his power none the less because they had no faith in his policy. That Mr. Disraeli could not be mistaken in anything began to be the right sort of thing to say. He was therefore now in a position to indulge freely in his own personal predilections with regard to the way of governing England. In the House of Commons he had no longer any rival to dread in debate. Mr. Gladstone had withdrawn from the active business of politics; Mr. Bright was not strong enough in physical health to

care much for controversy; there was no one else who could by any possibility be regarded as a proper adversary for Mr. Disraeli. The new Prime Minister therefore had everything his own way. He soon showed what sort of statesmanship he liked best. He soon turned away from the dusty and plodding paths of domestic legislation. He ceased even to pretend to have any interest in such commonplace and homely work. He showed that he was resolved to play on a vaster stage, and to seek the applauses of a more cosmopolitan audience. Napoleon invited Talma to Erfurt, that he might play to a pitfull of Kings. Mr. Disraeli was evidently determined to play to an audience of Kings and Emperors.

In politics as in art the weaknesses of the master of a school are most clearly seen in the performances of his imitators and admirers. Mr. Disraeli's admirers began to manifest his tendencies more emphatically than he allowed himself to do. At all public meetings and dinners where Conservative orators declaimed there was much talk about imperial instincts, imperial missions and destinies, and so forth. A distinguished member of Mr. Disraeli's Cabinet proclaimed that since the Conservatives came into office there had been something stirring in the very air which spoke of imperial enterprise. The Elizabethan days were to be restored, it was proudly declared. England was to resume her high place among the nations. She was to make her influence felt all over the world, but more especially on the European continent. The Cabinets and Chancelleries

of Europe were to learn that nothing was to be done any more without the authority of England. 'A spirited foreign policy' was to be inaugurated, a new era was to begin. Enthusiastic Conservatives seemed almost literally to swell with pride when they talked of the things to be done under the administration of Mr. Disraeli. The long ignoble reign of peace and non-intervention was at an end. Every man who did not proclaim that British influence was to reign paramount over Europe and Asia was anti-English, was cosmopolitan, was a member of the Peace Society, was a devotee of Cobden, a defender of the *Alabama* Treaty, a disciple of non-intervention, and generally speaking, a disgrace to his country, and a traitor to his Sovereign.

Thoughtful men who were not in any sense political partisans; men who were not engaged in politics on either side, began to shake their heads at these new political manifestations. There was an ominous self-consciousness about them. Empires are not made, or are not made great, they said, by persons who go about proclaiming an imperial mission. The statesmen who proved themselves truly imperial did not parade in heroic attitudes beforehand and say in pompous tones, 'Behold us!—we have it for our task to be the makers of Empires.' Such utterances were not happy prologues to the swelling act of the imperial theme. The greatness of the age of Elizabeth is not to be revived by talking of an Elizabethan revival. Such attempts seemed insincere and shallow. They resembled some of the æsthetic pretences and follies

of the day; the sham mediævalism, the affectation of the affectations of the Queen Anne age. There was too much posturing about the new statecraft to give comfort to plain and thoughtful minds. Goethe has said very well of a certain kind of affectation, that it is a pleasant and harmless thing to dress up as a Turk once in a way when going to a masked ball, but that it is unpardonable waste of time for an honest Western to try to make himself believe all day long that he is a Turk. Now England saw a few middle-aged or ancient gentlemen gravely trying to persuade themselves and their friends that they were Elizabethan conquerors of new worlds, Heaven-ordained makers of new Empires. The ordinary English mind was not imaginative enough for this sort of thing. Sensible and sober men would be certain to get tired of it soon.

Perhaps the first indication of the new foreign policy was given by the purchase of the shares which the Khedive of Egypt held in the Suez Canal. English Governments had in the first instance opposed the scheme for the construction of the Suez Canal, and English scientific men had endeavoured to prove that the scheme could never be carried out. Now however that the Canal was open and was a success, some alarmists began to find a danger to England in the fact that it made the approach to India more easy for other European Powers as well as for her. The Khedive of Egypt held nearly half the 400,000 original shares in the Canal, and the Khedive was going every day faster and faster on the road to

ruin. He was on the brink of bankruptcy. He had been living in the true fashion of an Eastern prince, gratifying every expensive whim as it crossed his listless mind; stimulating himself by the invention of new ways of spending money when the old caprices tired him; lavishing on the purchase and the keep of fat women treasures that might have saved millions of his wretched subjects from starvation. His 176,000 shares came into the market; and on November 25, 1875, the world was astonished by the news that the English Government had turned stock-jobber and bought them for four millions sterling. The idea was not the Government's own. The editor of a London evening paper, Mr. Frederick Greenwood, was the man to whom the thought first occurred. He made it known in the first instance, it is believed, to a member of the Cabinet, who threw cold water on it. Not discouraged, Mr. Greenwood tried the Prime Minister himself; and Mr. Disraeli was caught by the proposition, and the shares were instantly bought up in the name of the English Government. Seldom in our time has any act on the part of a Government been received with such general approbation. The London newspapers broke into a chorus of applause. The London Clubs were delighted. The air rang with praises of the courage and spirit shown by the Ministry. If here and there a faint voice was raised to suggest that the purchase was a foolish proceeding, that it was useless, that it was undignified, a shout of offended patriotism drowned the ignoble remonstrance. Some Continental newspapers did a

good deal to stimulate the feeling that prevailed in England by condemning the act as audacious, arrogant, and ominous of an intention to interfere too actively in foreign affairs. This was the very course to stir the feeling of Englishmen. There was a general sense of satisfaction at the idea that England was again regarded as an arrogant and dominating power. Men held up their heads grandly, and went about pride in their port, defiance in their eye, nobly over-conscious of belonging to a nation which could make her influence felt once more in foreign affairs. When Parliament met, the Liberal leaders ventured to make some objection to the purchase and to the mode of completing it; but all wise persons declared that the very attempt only showed how entirely the Liberal leaders were out of sympathy with the English people. It is true that one member of the Cabinet, Lord Derby, endeavoured to make as little as possible of the purchase, and to represent it as a step taken merely to prevent any foreign influence from preponderating in the management of a canal which was chiefly important for English commerce. Mr. Disraeli and some of his colleagues, on the other hand, spoke in a grand and mysterious way which gave people to understand that the buying of the shares was part of some great scheme of policy destined to make England mistress of the East, and to checkmate the designs of a jealous world. Nothing in particular came of the bargain in the end, and the popular enthusiasm soon cooled down. The act, however, is of historical importance as the first of a series of strokes

made by the Government in foreign policy, each of which came in the nature of a surprise to Parliament and the country. It is probable that Mr. Disraeli counted upon making his Government popular by affording to the public at intervals the exciting luxury of a new sensation. The public were undoubtedly rather tired of having been so long quiet and prosperous. They liked to know that their Government was doing something. There are fashions in politics as in literature and in dress. 'Sensationalism' was now decidedly the mode in the political world. Mr. Disraeli led the fashion, and stimulated the public taste. The Government tried to establish a South African Confederation, and sent out Mr. Froude, the romantic historian, to act as the representative of their policy. The Prince of Wales was sent on a tour to India, a very reasonable and proper thing in itself, but which the Government endeavoured to surround with all the radiance of a new Avatar. The Prince was taken out to India and introduced to all the Princes and other persons whom officialism thought it convenient for him to meet. He got no nearer to the knowledge of the real feelings of any of the Indian populations than if he had remained at Marlborough House. The Government meanwhile made some changes in the relations of the India Office here to the Viceroy in Calcutta, which gave much greater power into the hands of the Secretary for India. One immediate result of this was the retirement of Lord Northbrook, a prudent and able man, before the term of his administration had actu-

ally arrived. Mr. Disraeli gave the country another little surprise. He appointed Lord Lytton Viceroy of India. Lord Lytton had been previously known chiefly as the writer of pretty and sensuous verse, and the author of one or two showy and feeble novels. In literary capacity he was at least as much inferior to his father as his father was to Scott or Goethe. All that was known of him besides was, that he had held several small diplomatic posts without either distinction or discredit. The world was certainly a good deal astonished at the appointment of such a man to the most important office under the Sovereign; an office which had strained the intellectual energies of men like Dalhousie and Canning and Elgin. But people were in general willing to believe that Mr. Disraeli knew Lord Lytton to be possessed of a gift of administration which the world outside had not had any chance of discerning in him. Not much, it was remembered, was known of Lord Mayo's capacity for the task of governing India when he was sent out to Calcutta; and Lord Mayo's administration had undoubtedly been successful. There was no reason why Lord Lytton should not turn out a born administrator. There was no reason why he should not suddenly prove the possession of unexpected gifts, like another Cromwell, Clive, or Spinola. There was something too which gratified many persons in the appointment. It seemed gracious and kindly of Mr. Disraeli thus to recognise and exalt the son of his old friend and companion in arms. There was a feeling all over

England which wished well to the appointment and sincerely hoped it might prove a success.

Another little sensation was created by the invention of a new title for the Queen. At the beginning of the Session of 1876 the Royal Speech announced that an addition was to be made to the Sovereign's titles, and after several attempts on the part of the Opposition to get at the nature of the change, Mr. Disraeli at last announced in a somewhat hesitating way that the Queen was to be called 'Empress of India.' A strong dislike was felt to this superfluous and tawdry addition to the ancient style of the sovereigns of England. The title of Emperor had been a good deal tarnished of late. The Emperor of the French had but recently fallen in the dust; there had been an Emperor of Mexico and an Emperor of Hayti. The title of the German Emperor was in one sense only a restoration of a dignity which had been historical; and in any case the restoration was not especially popular in England. But to convert the immemorial crown of the English sovereign into a brand-new glittering imperial diadem seemed to most persons simply an act of vulgarity. The educated feeling of the country rose in revolt against this preposterous innovation. Some of the debates in the House of Commons were full of fire and spirit, and recalled the memory of more stirring times when the Liberal party was in heart and strength. Mr. Lowe spoke against the new title with a vivacity and a bitterness of sarcasm that reminded listeners of his famous opposition to the Reform Bill of 1866. Mr.

Joseph Cowen, Member for Newcastle, who had been in the House for some sessions without making any mark, suddenly broke into the debates with a speech which at once won him the name of an orator, and which a leading Member of the Government, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, described as having 'electrified' the House. Mr. Disraeli chaffed the Opposition rather than reasoned with it. He pointed out as one justification of the title the fact that Spenser had dedicated his 'Faerie Queene' to 'the most high mightie and magnificent Empresse Elizabeth.' Spenser of course only used the word after the fantastic ways of court flattery in his time, and because he thought Empress sounded well. Milton's Satan twice addresses Eve as Empress. Mr. Disraeli also cited in evidence a letter from a young lady at school who had directed his attention to the fact that in 'Guy's Geography' the Queen was already described as Empress of India. This style of argument did not add much to the dignity of the debate. Mr. Lowe spoke with justifiable anger and contempt of the Prime Minister's introducing 'the lispings of the nursery' into a grave discussion, and asked whether Mr. Disraeli wished to make the House in general think as meanly of the subject as he did himself. The Government, of course, carried their point. They deferred so far to public feeling as to put into the Act a provision against the use of the Imperial title in the United Kingdom. There was indeed a desire that its use should be prohibited everywhere except in India, and most of the members of

the Opposition were at first under the impression that the Government had undertaken to do so much. But the only restriction introduced into the Act had reference to the employment of the additional title in these islands. The unlucky subject was the occasion of a new and a somewhat unseemly dispute afterwards. In a speech which he delivered to a public meeting at East Retford, Mr. Lowe made an unfortunate statement to the effect that the Queen had endeavoured to induce two former Ministers to confer upon her this new title and had not succeeded. It was a very rash act on the part of a responsible public man to make such a statement without positive certainty as to its truth ; perhaps it would not have been a very wise or proper proceeding on the part of such a man to make the statement even if it were true. Mr. Lowe proved to be absolutely wrong in his assertion. No attempt of the kind had ever been made by the Queen. Mr. Disraeli found his enemy delivered into his hands. The question was incidentally and indirectly brought up in the House of Commons on May 2, 1876, and Mr. Disraeli seized the opportunity. He denounced Mr. Lowe, thundered at him from across the table, piled up a heap of negative evidence to show that his assertion could not be true, and at the very close of his speech came down on the hapless offender with the crushing announcement that he had the authority of the Queen herself to contradict the statement. Nothing could have been in worse taste than Mr. Disraeli's way of making this very necessary contradiction. It is

evident that the right course would have been to put into the fewest and the simplest words the announcement which Her Majesty had very properly authorised the Minister to make. The dignity of the Sovereign required that her name and her word should not be introduced to the House by a somewhat coarse rhetorical artifice at the end of a speech, and that they should not be preluded by impassioned sentences of boisterous and furious denunciation. Mr. Lowe sat like one crushed, while Mr. Disraeli roared at him and banged the table at him. He said nothing that night; but on the following Thursday evening he made an apology which assuredly did not want completeness or humility. The title which was the occasion for so much debate has not come into greater popular favour since that time. It is used in India, and we occasionally see evidences of an inclination to bring it quietly into use elsewhere; but there was a very general concurrence of opinion among educated persons in all parts of the country as to the impropriety of the measure adopted by the Government and the vulgarising effect of the new addition to the Royal title. It was all part of an imperialising policy, some men said, part of a deliberate scheme to make the institutions of the country less liberal and popular. It is part, other men said, of a tawdry love for finery and frippery in language and policy; it savours of the taste which associated the banner of St. George with the mountains of Rasselas. Mr. Disraeli, however, had a large majority in both Houses of Parliament, and he carried his proposal by about the same pre-

ponderance of votes in the Commons as in the Lords. Then the country soon forgot all about the matter. More serious questions were coming up to engage the attention of the public.

When Mr. Disraeli was pressed during the debates on the Royal Title to give some really serious reason for the change, it was observed as significant that he made reference more or less vague to the necessity of asserting the position of the Sovereign of England as supreme ruler over the whole empire of India. The Prime Minister spoke in the tone of one who feels more than he desires to express; of one who gives a warning which he wishes to be understood without need of fuller explanation. Every one knew what Mr. Disraeli meant. He had undoubtedly let drop words which were calculated to produce a deep effect on the public mind. They decided the wavering opinions of many people. There were men who sincerely disliked the idea of the fire-new title of Empress, and who yet felt that after what the Prime Minister had said it would not be prudent to oppose the act of the Government. Mr. Disraeli had purposely touched a chord which was sure to vibrate all over the country. The necessity to which he alluded was the necessity of setting up the flag ot England on the citadel of England's Asiatic Empire as a warning to the one enemy whom the English people believed they had reason to dread. Mr. Disraeli had raised what has been called the Russian spectre. No influence during our time has been so potent to direct the foreign, and even the domestic, policy, to disturb the relations of

parties and to rouse the passions of the people, as that which is exercised by the dread and distrust of Russian ambition. A great crisis was now again at hand.

It has been already mentioned that Lord Aberdeen was of opinion at the close of the Crimean War that that war might secure the peace of Europe for twenty-five years. His opinion was thought then to be hardly doing justice to the efficacy of the measures taken to sustain Turkey and to restrain the ambition of Russia. Lord Aberdeen, however, had overrated instead of underrating the endurance of the peace that was made by the Treaty of Paris. Only twenty-two years had passed when Turkey and Russia were at war again. During all the interval Turkey had been occupied in throwing away every opportunity for her political and social reorganisation. The influence of the statesmanship of Constantinople had been growing more and more baneful to all the populations under the control of the Sultan. There had been insurrections in Crete, in the Herzegovina, in other parts of the provinces misgoverned by Turkey; and they had been put down, whenever the Porte was strong enough, with a barbarous severity. Men on both sides of English politics were now losing all hope of Turkey's regeneration. Two plain facts were present to the consciousness of Europe. Turkey was sinking day by day; Russia was returning to the position she occupied before the Crimean War. Was Russia also returning to the ambition which she undoubtedly cherished before that time?

She had lately been making rapid advances into Central Asia. Post after post which were once believed to be secure from her approach were dropping into her hands. Her goal of one day became her starting-point of the next. Early in July 1875, Lord Derby received an account of disturbances in the Herzegovina, and something like an organised insurrection in Bosnia. The provinces inhabited by men of alien race and religion over which Turkey rules have always been the source of her weakness. They have always in one form or another invited foreign intervention. Where the intervention was necessary and just they had been its vindication; where it was selfish and unnecessary they had given it its excuse. The revolt which ended in the independence of Greece began in the Danubian provinces. The Crimean War had its origin in the same region. The disturbances in Herzegovina in 1862 and Crete in 1867, had each in its turn almost provoked the intervention of Western Europe. This time it became quite clear in a moment to almost every eye that a crisis had arrived, and that a new chapter of the Eastern Question was to be opened. It is not less Turkey's misfortune than her fault—certainly not less her fault than her misfortune—that her way of governing her foreign provinces has been the cause of so much trouble to Western Europe. Fate has given to the most incapable and worthless Government in the world a task which would strain the resources of the loftiest public spirit and the most accomplished statesmanship. Turkey has to rule over a great

variety of nationalities and of creeds all more or less jumbled together within a comparatively limited area. These different sects and races agree in hardly anything but in their common detestation of Ottoman rule. Amongst themselves their rivalries are unceasing and bitter. Again and again Turkey has made it her plausible excuse for maintaining a system of stern repression in the south-east of Europe, that if she lifted a strong hand from these populations they would be found carrying on something like an internecine struggle amongst themselves. The Slav dreads and detests the Greek. The Greek despises the Slav. The Albanian objects alike to Slav and to Greek. The Mahommedan Albanian detests the Catholic Albanian. The Slavs are drawn towards Russia by affinity of race and of religion. But this very fact, which makes in one sense their political strength, brings with it a certain condition of weakness, because by making them more formidable to Greeks and to Germans it increases the dislike of their growing power, and the determination to oppose it. It would indeed take a very wise, far-seeing, and flexible system of administration to enable a central Government to rule with satisfaction and with success all these differing and contending races. The Turkish Government managed the matter worse than it might seem possible for a Government to do which had been brought for centuries within the action of European civilisation. Turkish rule seems to exist only in one of two extremes. In certain places it means entire relaxation of authority; in others, it

means the most rude and rigorous oppression. The hand of the statesman at Constantinople is absolutely unfelt in some of the remoter provinces supposed to be under Turkish sway. The warlike inhabitants of some highland region live their wild and lawless lives, levying blackmail on travellers, and preying on the peaceable commerce of their neighbours with as much indifference to the officials of Stamboul as to the remonstrances of Western statesmanship. But it may be that not far from their frontier-line there is some hapless province whose people feel the hand of Turkey strong and cruel on their necks at every moment of their lives. It happens, as is not unnatural in such a system, that the repression is heaviest where it is least needed, and that in the only cases where severity and rigour might be excused there is an entire relaxation of all central authority. In the condition of things thus hastily sketched out, it is natural that there should be constant upheavings of political and social rebellion. To the Slav populations the neighbourhood of Russia has all the disturbing effect which the propinquity of a magnet might have on the works of some delicate piece of mechanism, or which the neighbourhood of one great planet has on the movements of another. The settlement made by the Crimean War had since that time been gradually breaking down. Servia was an independent State in all but the name. The Danubian provinces, which were to have been governed by separate rulers, came to unite themselves first under one ruler and then into one complete system and

at last emerged into the sovereign State of Roumania under the Prussian Prince, Charles of Hohenzollern. Thus the result which most of the European Powers at the time of the Congress of Paris endeavoured to prevent was successfully accomplished in spite of their inclinations. The efforts to keep Bosnia and Herzegovina in quiet subjection to the Sultan proved a miserable failure. The insurrection which now broke out in Herzegovina spread with rapidity. The Turkish statesmen insisted that it was receiving help not only from Russia but from the subjects of Austria as well as from Servia and Montenegro. An appeal was made to the English Government to use its influence with Austria in order to prevent the insurgents from receiving any assistance from across the Austrian frontier. Servia and Montenegro were appealed to in a similar manner. Lord Derby seems to have acted with indecision and with feebleness. He does not appear to have appreciated the immediate greatness of the crisis, and he offended popular feeling, and even the public conscience, by urging on the Porte that the best they could do was to put down the insurrection as quickly as possible, and not allow it to swell to the magnitude of a question of European interest. Lord Derby knew the anxiety existing among many of the European Powers to interfere on behalf of the Christian populations of Turkey, and it almost seemed as if he dreaded the sort of public scandal this must occasion more than the possibility of Turkey using her repressive powers with an excess of rigour.

The insurrection continued to spread, and at last it was determined by some of Western Powers that the time had come for European intervention. Count Andrassy, the Austrian Minister, drew up a Note which was to be addressed to the Porte. In this note Austria, Germany, and Russia united in a declaration that the promises of reform made by the Porte had not been carried into effect, and that some combined action by the Powers of Europe was necessary to insist on the fulfilment of the many engagements which Turkey had made and broken. The Note declared that if something of the kind were not done, the Governments of Servia and Montenegro would be compelled by the enthusiasm of their populations to support the insurrection in the Turkish provinces, and that the only means of preventing a general outbreak was a firm resolution on the part of the Western Powers to compel Turkey to redress the grievances of which the Christian populations complained. This Note was dated December 30, 1875, and it was communicated to the Powers which had signed the Treaty of Paris. France and Italy were ready at once to join in it; but England delayed. In fact Lord Derby held off so long that it was not until he had received a despatch from the Porte itself requesting his Government to join in the Note, that he at last consented to take part in the remonstrance. The Turkish Government seem to have desired the presence of England in this movement as one desires the presence of a secret ally. Rightly or wrongly the statesmen of Constantinople

had got it into their heads that England was their devoted friend, bound by her own interests to protect them against whatever opposition. Instead therefore of regarding England's co-operation in the Andrassy Note as one other influence brought to compel them to fulfil their engagements, they seem to have accepted it as a secret force working on their side to enable them to escape from their responsibilities. Lord Derby joined in the Andrassy Note. It was sent to the Porte. The Ottoman Government showed some cleverness in their way of meeting the difficulty. They accepted politely all or nearly all the demands addressed to them, expressed in cool and pleasant terms their entire satisfaction with the kindly suggestions made to them, declared themselves rather gratified than otherwise to have their attention called to any little omissions on their part, and promised to carry out in the readiest manner the suggestions which the Note contained.

Turkey did nothing more than promise. She took no step to meet the demands made by the European Powers. After a few weeks it became perfectly evident that she had not only done nothing but had never intended to do anything. Russia, therefore, proposed that the three Imperial Ministers of the Continent should meet at Berlin and consider what steps should be taken in order to make the Andrassy Note a reality. A document, called the Berlin Memorandum, was drawn up, in which the three Powers pointed out the increasing danger of disturbance in the South-East of Europe, and the necessity for at

once carrying into effect the objects of the Andrassy Note. It was proposed that arms should be suspended for two months between the Porte and the insurgent provinces, and that meanwhile peace should be negotiated, and that the Consuls and the Delegates of the European Powers should watch over the carrying out of the proposed reforms. The Memorandum ended by a significant intimation, that if the period of suspension of arms were allowed to pass without the desired objects being attained, or at least approached, there must be an agreement among the Powers as to the further measures which might be called for in the interest of the general peace. The meaning of all this was perfectly clear. The Andrassy Note had invited Turkey's attention to her unfulfilled engagements. Turkey had admitted her deficiencies and promised to supply them. The Berlin Memorandum now proposed to consider the measures by which to enforce on Turkey the fulfilment of her broken promises. It was distinctly implied that should Turkey fail to comply, force would be used to compel her. But, on the other hand, it is clear that this was a menace which would of itself have insured the object. It is out of the question to suppose that Turkey would have thought of resisting the concerted action of England, France, Austria, Germany, Russia, and Italy. The threat of combined action was in itself the surest guarantee of peace. The situation was described very effectively by Lord Granville a year or two after. A man is making a disturbance in the street; if one peaceful

inhabitant remonstrates and interferes, it is very likely that his intervention will only lead to further violence; but if half a dozen policemen come up it is more than probable that the disturber will go quietly away. This is a fair illustration of the condition of things in Europe, and of the sense and spirit of the Berlin Memorandum. Overwhelming and irresistible force was to be brought to bear against Turkey, in order that Turkey might have no possible excuse or opportunity for attempting resistance.

Unfortunately, however, Lord Derby and the English Government did not see their way to join in the Berlin Memorandum. Lord Derby, it seems, was of opinion that a secret agreement between Germany, Austria, and Russia had existed since 1873, and he feared to allow England to be drawn into what might have been a dangerous complication. Other English statesmen were convinced that Russia was all the while secretly stirring up that discontent in the Christian provinces which the Western Powers were using as an argument for intervention. Lord Derby had to decide, and it seems to us he decided in the wrong way. He refused to join in the Berlin Memorandum. Not merely did he refuse to join in it, but he made no suggestion as to any other course which might be taken if the Memorandum were abandoned. The refusal of England was fatal to the project. The Memorandum was never presented. Concert between the European Powers was for the time at an end. From that moment everyone in Western Europe knew that war was certain in the

East. A succession of startling events kept public attention on the strain. There was an outbreak of Mussulman fanaticism at Salonica, and the French and German Consuls were murdered. A revolutionary demonstration took place in Constantinople, and the Sultan Abdul Aziz was dethroned. The miserable Abdul Aziz committed suicide in a day or two after. This was the Sultan who had been received in England with so much official ceremony and public acclaim. It was he who had been welcomed at Windsor, had been entertained by the Corporation of London, had been the lion of the season, and the sensation of the sight-seeing public. At the time when he was feasted and applauded in London the Cretan insurrection was going on, and his troops were doing the business of repression with an unsparing cruelty worthy of the Soldans of the Middle Ages. His death by his own hand in a fit of despair, as he found himself dethroned, deserted, lonely, and hated, was a strange close for the career which had begun with so much promise and amid such universal expectation at the time of the Crimean War. His nephew Murad was made Sultan in his place. Murad reigned only three months and was then dethroned, and his brother Hamid put in his place. Suddenly the attention of the English public was called away to events more terrible than palace revolutions in Constantinople. An insurrection had broken out in Bulgaria, and the Turkish Government sent large numbers of Bashi-Bazouks and other irregular troops to crush it. They did not, however, stay their

hand when the insurrection had been crushed. Repression soon turned into massacre. Rumours began to reach Constantinople of hideous wholesale murders committed in Bulgaria. The Constantinople correspondent of the *Daily News* investigated the evidence, and found it but too true. In a few days after accounts were laid before the English public of the deeds which ever since have been known as 'the Bulgarian atrocities.' A story was told of the wholesale massacre of women and children, such as could hardly have found its parallel in the worst days of an earlier Byzantine rule, or under the odious reign of the later Sovereigns of Delhi.

Nothing could have been more ill-advised and unfortunate than the manner in which Mr. Disraeli at first dealt with these terrible stories. He treated them with a levity which jarred harshly on the ears of almost all his listeners. It was plain that he did not believe them or attach any importance to them. No one ever supposed that he was really wanting in humanity; it is certain that if he had believed such crimes were committed he would have been incapable of excusing them or making light of them. But he did not believe in any of the stories; he set them down too hastily as mere figment of rumour, and the newspaper correspondent, and what he called, 'coffee-house babble.' He took no trouble to examine the testimony on which they rested. He, therefore, thought himself warranted in dealing with them as if they were merely stories to laugh at. He evidently did not know much about the Turkish provinces of

our day or about Turkish affairs in general. He endeavoured to make out that the Bashi-Bazouks were really the residents and occupiers of Bulgaria. He described them as Circassians who had been settled there long since with the approval of all Europe. He reproached the Liberal party with the lack of sympathy they now showed for a race of beings in whom they once professed such an interest. Mr. Disraeli's ideas of Bulgaria were evidently drawn from vague reminiscences of Voltaire's 'Candide;' and he depicted the Bulgarians as cruel oppressors of the Bashi-Bazouks. He expressed entire scepticism as to the tortures said to have been inflicted on their victims by the Turkish soldiery. Oriental races, he gravely observed, did not usually have recourse to torture, 'they generally terminated their connection with culprits in a more expeditious manner.' All this might have been what the German quack in Scott's 'Antiquary' calls, 'very witty and comedy;' but the House was not exactly in the vein for mirth. Mr. Disraeli had always the faculty of persuading himself to believe or disbelieve anything according as he liked. The statesman who could really persuade himself into the belief that Oriental races did not usually have recourse to torture, might well persuade himself of anything. Probably for the time Mr. Disraeli actually believed that the Bashi-Bazouks were gentle exiles of the class of Thaddeus of Warsaw, sweetly incapable of harming any creature. But the House and the country would have preferred the Prime Minister in a different mood just then. The

subject proved to be far too serious for light-minded treatment. Mr. Disraeli felt this himself afterwards, and made an attempt to persuade the country that there was no levity in his talk about the Oriental way of terminating the connection with a culprit. Mr. Baring, the English Consul, sent out specially to Bulgaria to make inquiries, and who was supposed to be in general sympathy with Turkey, reported that no fewer than twelve thousand persons had been killed in the district of Philippopolis. He confirmed substantially some of the most shocking details of the massacre of women and children, which had been given by Mr. MacGahan, a correspondent whom the *Daily News* had sent out to the spot, to see with his own eyes, and report what he saw. There was no disputing the significance of some of that testimony. The defenders of the Turks insisted that the only deaths were those which took place in fight; insurgents on one side, Turkish soldiers on the other. But Mr. Baring, as well as the *Daily News* correspondent, saw whole masses of the dead bodies of women and children piled up in places where the bodies of no combatants were to be seen. The women and children were simply massacred. The Turkish Government may not have known at first of the deeds that were done by their soldiers. But it is certain that after the facts had been forced upon their attention, they conferred new honours on the chief perpetrators of the crimes which shocked the moral sense of all Europe.

Mr. Bright happily described the agitation which followed in England as an uprising of the English

people. At first it was an uprising without a leader. Soon, however, it had a chief of incomparable energy and power. Mr. Gladstone came out of his semi-retirement. He threw aside polemics and criticism. He forgot for a while Homer and the Pope. He flung himself into the agitation against Turkey with the impassioned energy of a youth. He made speeches in the House of Commons and out of it; he attended monster meetings indoors and out of doors; he published pamphlets, he wrote letters, he brought forward motions in Parliament; he denounced the crimes of Turkey and the policy which would support Turkey, with an eloquence that for the time set England aflame. After a while no doubt there set in a sort of reaction against the fervent mood. The country could not long continue in this white heat of excitement. Some men began to protest against 'the sentimental' in politics; others grew tired of hearing Turkey denounced; others again complained that they had got too much of the Bulgarian atrocities. Moreover, Mr. Disraeli and his supporters were able to work with great effect on that strong deep-rooted feeling of the modern Englishman, his distrust and dread of Russia. Mr. Gladstone was accused of acting in such a manner as to make himself the instrument of Russian designs on Constantinople. He had in his pamphlet, 'Bulgarian Horrors, and the Question of the East,' insisted that the only way to secure any permanent good for the Christian provinces of Turkey was to turn the Turkish officials 'bag and baggage' out of them. What people called

the 'bag and baggage' policy was denounced as a demand for the expulsion of the Turks, all the Turks, the Turkish men and women, out of Europe. Of course what Mr. Gladstone meant was exactly what he said, that the rule of Turkish officialism should cease in the Christian provinces; that these provinces should have autonomous Governments subject to the Sultan; not that all the individual Turks should be turned out. But the cry went forth that he had called for the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and that the moment the Turks went out of Constantinople the Russians must come in. Nothing could have been better suited to rouse up reaction and alarm. A sudden and strong revulsion of feeling took place in favour of the Government. Mr. Gladstone was honestly regarded by millions of Englishmen as the friend and the instrument of Russia, Mr. Disraeli as the champion of England, and the enemy of England's enemy. Mr. Disraeli was, like another Chatham, bidding England be of good cheer and hurling defiance at her foes.

Mr. Disraeli? By this time there was no Mr. Disraeli. The 11th of August, 1876, was an important day in the parliamentary history of England. Mr. Disraeli made then his last speech in the House of Commons. It was a speech filled for the most part with banter and ridicule directed against those who were leading the agitation against the Government. But towards the close Mr. Disraeli struck a louder and a stronger note. He sustained and defended the policy of the Government as an Imperial

policy, the object of which was to maintain the Empire of England, 'Nor will we ever agree to any step, though it may obtain for a moment comparative quiet and a false prosperity, that hazards the existence of that Empire.' The House of Commons little knew that these were the last words it was to hear from Mr. Disraeli. The secret was well kept. It was made known only to the newspapers that night. Next morning all England knew that Benjamin Disraeli had become Earl of Beaconsfield. The title once intended for Burke had come to the author of 'Vivian Grey.' Everybody was well satisfied that if Mr. Disraeli liked an earldom he should have it. His political career had had claims enough to any reward of the kind that his Sovereign could bestow. If he had battled for honour it was but fair that he should have the prize. Coming as it did just then the announcement of his elevation to the peerage seemed like a defiance flung in the face of those who would arraign his policy. The attacks made on Mr. Disraeli were to be answered by Lord Beaconsfield; his enemies had become his footstool.

CHAPTER LXV.

THE CONGRESS OF BERLIN.

Lord Beaconsfield went down to the county which he had represented so long, and made a farewell speech at Aylesbury. The occasion must for him have been one to call up genuine emotion. The speech was in many parts worthy of the occasion. Lord Beaconsfield set forth his reasons for consenting to quit that splendid arena on which he had so long played a brilliant part. Years were telling on him, he explained in some sentences full of feeling and of good taste; he was no longer as young as when forty-three years before he addressed the electors of Buckinghamshire in that same place. He said that his colleagues had been more careful of his feelings than Gil Blas was of those of the Archbishop of Granada; but he added that he was less self-complacent than the Archbishop. He was willing therefore to retire from the field in good time, and to be content to serve his country in the more quiet ways of the House of Lords. Unfortunately Lord Beaconsfield soon went on to make a fierce attack on his political opponents. He marred the effect of his speech artistically as well as politically by the overwrought and acrimonious language in which he allowed himself to indulge. Speak-

ing of the 'sublime sentiments' which had been evoked by the crimes done in Bulgaria, he pointed to the danger of designing politicians taking advantage of them 'for their own sinister ends,' and described such conduct as 'worse than any of those Bulgarian atrocities which now occupy attention.' Nothing could be in worse taste. It was impossible to doubt that Lord Beaconsfield's picture of the designing politicians was meant to be understood as a picture of Mr. Gladstone and those who supported him. The controversy, bitter enough before, became still more bitter now. Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone were thrown into as sharp an antagonism as that of two gladiators in a Roman arena or two duellists standing at twelve paces from each other. They had been life-long opponents; this now seemed like a duel to the death. The policy each represented may be described in a few very summary words. Lord Beaconsfield was for maintaining Turkey at all risks as a barrier against Russia. Mr. Gladstone was for renouncing all responsibility for Turkey and taking the consequences. Men who prided themselves on being practical politicians above all things went naturally with Lord Beaconsfield. Men who held that sound politics cannot exist without sound morals went with Mr. Gladstone. It is our business, the one set of men said, to secure the interests of England: if Turkey is useful to us as a barrier against Russia, we are bound to keep her in her place for our own sake; her private character is of no account to us. The other men argued that it was the duty

of England to release herself from all responsibility for the crimes of Turkey, and to refuse to stand in the way of the developing freedom of the Christian populations. 'The public conscience of England,' said the one; 'the interests of England,' said the other. 'Be just and fear not,' Mr. Gladstone urged. 'No sentiment,' rejoined Lord Beaconsfield. 'The crimes of Turkey,' was the cry of one party; 'The ambition of Russia,' made the alarm-note of the other.

Each statesman made a mistake, and each mistake was characteristic of the man. Lord Beaconsfield misunderstood the condition of public feeling and the gravity of the case when he thought he could get rid of the Bulgarian events by a laugh and a light word. Mr. Gladstone afterwards made a mistake when he acted on the assumption that mere sympathy and mere sensibility could long prevail in the English public mind against the traditional distrust of Russia. When Lord Beaconsfield and his supporters once had their opportunity of laying that card, they had the game absolutely in their hands.

The common expectation was soon fulfilled. At the close of June 1876, Servia and Montenegro declared war against Turkey. Servia's struggle was short. The Servians were assisted by the advice and the active presence of a large number of Russian officers who volunteered for the purpose. The small Servian army, however, proved no match for the Turks. At the beginning of September the struggle was over, and Servia was practically at Turkey's feet.

The hardy Montenegrin mountaineers held their own stoutly against the Turks everywhere, but they could not seriously influence the fortunes of a war. England proposed an armistice of not less than a month. Turkey delayed, shuffled, paltered, at length suggested an armistice till the end of the following March. The suggestion was preposterous. Such a period of suspense would have been ruinous to Servia and Montenegro, intolerable to Europe. Russia then intervened and insisted upon an armistice at once, and her demand was acceded to by Turkey. Meanwhile the general feeling in England on both sides was growing stronger and stronger. Public meetings of Mr. Gladstone's supporters were held all over the country, and the English Government was urged in the most emphatic manner to bring some strong influence to bear on Turkey. On the other hand, it cannot be doubted that the common suspicion of Russia's designs began to grow more keen and wakeful than ever. Lord Derby frankly made known to the Emperor Alexander what was thought or feared in England, and the Emperor replied by pledging his sacred word that he had no intention of occupying Constantinople, and that if he were compelled by events to occupy any part of Bulgaria, it should be only provisionally, and until the safety of the Christians should be secured. Then Lord Derby proposed that a Conference of the European Powers should be held at Constantinople in order to agree upon some scheme which should provide at once for the proper government of the various provinces and populations

subject to Turkey, and at the same time for the maintenance of the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The proposal for a Conference was accepted by all the Great Powers, and on November 8, 1876, it was announced that Lord Salisbury and Sir Henry Elliott, the English Ambassador at Constantinople, were to attend as the representatives of England.

Lord Beaconsfield was apparently determined to recover the popularity that had been somewhat impaired by his unlucky way of dealing with the massacres of Bulgaria. His plan now was to go boldly in for denunciation of Russia. He sometimes talked of Russia as he might of an enemy who had already declared war against England. On November 9, 1876, he spoke at a banquet given by the new Lord Mayor at the Guildhall. He glorified the strength and the resources of England. If the struggle comes, he said, there is no country so prepared for war as England. 'In a righteous cause, England is not the country that will have to inquire whether she can enter upon a second or a third campaign. In a righteous cause England will commence a fight that will not end until right is done.' It was clear that the allusions in the speech were to Russia. The words about the second and third campaign were of unmistakable application. Either by coincidence or otherwise, the Russian Emperor delivered a speech the very next day to the nobles of Moscow, which sounded like a direct answer to Lord Beaconsfield's challenge. Alexander declared that if he could not

succeed in obtaining with the concert of Europe such guarantees as he thought necessary to require of Turkey, he was firmly determined to act independently, and was convinced that the whole of Russia would respond to his summons. The words of Lord Beaconsfield were spoken somewhat late on the evening of Thursday. The Emperor addressed the nobles at Moscow the very next day. Still there was ample time for the ordinary telegraphic report of Lord Beaconsfield's speech to be in Alexander's hands long before the hour at which he had to address the Moscow assembly. Most persons assumed that the speech of the Russian Emperor was undoubtedly an answer to that of the English Prime Minister. The prospects of a peaceful settlement of the European controversy seemed to become heavily overclouded. Lord Beaconsfield appeared to be holding the dogs of war by the collar, and only waiting for the convenient moment to let them slip. Every eye was turned upon him. He must have felt that his ambition was fast reaching the very sea-mark of its utmost sail. The decision of peace or war seemed to be absolutely with him. He held the destinies of millions in the hollow of his hand. Everyone knew that some of his colleagues, Lord Derby for example, and Lord Carnarvon, were opposed to any thought of war, and felt almost as strongly for the Christian provinces of Turkey as Mr. Gladstone did. But people shook their heads doubtfully when it was asked whether Lord Derby or Lord Carnarvon, or both combined, could prevail in strength of will against Lord Beaconsfield.

The Conference at Constantinople came to nothing. The Turkish statesmen at first attempted to put off the diplomatists of the West by the announcement that the Sultan had granted a Constitution to Turkey, and that there was to be a Parliament at which representatives of all the provinces were to speak up for themselves. There was in fact a Turkish Parliament called together. The first meeting of the Conference was disturbed by the sound of salvoes of cannon to celebrate the opening of the first Constitutional Assembly of Turkey. Of course the Western statesmen could not be put off by an announcement of this kind. They knew well enough what a Turkish Parliament must mean. A Parliament is not made by the decree of an autocrat calling a number of men into a room and bidding them debate and divide. To have a Parliament there must, first of all, be something like a free people. Europe had seen a brand-new Egyptian Parliament created not long before, and had felt at first a sort of languid curiosity about it; and then after a while learned that it had sunk into the ground or faded away somehow without leaving any trace of its constitutional existence. It seems almost superfluous to say that the Turkish Parliament was ordered to disappear very soon after the occasion passed away for trying to deceive the Great European Powers. Evidently Turkey had got it into her head that the English Government would at the last moment stand by her, and would not permit her to be coerced. It is not certain, perhaps cannot be known during this generation, whether

there was any truth in the report so freely spread abroad in England, that private hints were given to Turkish statesmen by an English diplomatist encouraging them to resist the demands of the Great Powers, and directly or indirectly promising them the support of England. What is certain is, that Turkey held out in the end and refused to come to terms, and the Conference broke up without having accomplished any good. New attempts at arrangement were made between England, Russia, and others of the Great Powers, but they fell through. Some unfortunate cause seemed always to prevent any kind of cordial co-operation. Then at last Russia took the field against Turkey. On April 24, 1877, Russia declared war, and on June 27 a Russian army crossed the Danube and moved towards the Balkans, meeting with comparatively little resistance, while at the same time another Russian force invaded Asia Minor.

For a while the Russians seemed likely to carry all before them. Suddenly, however, it appeared that they had made many mistakes in their arrangements. They had made the one great mistake of altogether undervaluing their enemies. Their preparations were hasty and imperfect. The Turks, to do them justice, have never wanted fighting power. They have at all times shown great strength and skill in the mere work of resistance. Long after they had ceased to be anything of a terror to Europe as an aggressive Power, they again and again showed tremendous strength and energy in defence. In this instance they were quick to see the mistakes which the Russians had

made. They turned upon them unexpectedly and made a gallant and almost desperate resistance. One of their commanders, Osman Pasha, suddenly threw up defensive works at Plevna in Bulgaria, a point the Russians had neglected to secure, and maintained himself there, repulsing the Russians many times with great slaughter. For a time success seemed altogether on the side of the Turks, and many people in England were convinced that the Russian enterprise was already an entire failure; that nothing remained for the armies of the Czar but retreat, disaster, and disgrace. Cooler observers, however, still assumed that where great superiority of strength and resources exist, military superiority must come in the end. It was evidently only a question of time to enable Russia to make good her mistakes and to recover her energies. Thus far the defeats of the Russians had really been inflicted by themselves. Their own blunders had given the battle into the hands of their enemies. Taught by experience the Czar confided the direction of the campaign to the hands of General Todleben, the great soldier whose splendid defence of Sebastopol had made the one grand military reputation of the Crimean War. Under his directing skill the fortunes of the campaign soon turned. Just at the very moment when English critics were proclaiming that the campaign in Asia Minor was over, and that Plevna never could be taken, there came a succession of crushing defeats inflicted by the Russians on the Turks both in Europe and Asia. Kars was taken by assault on

November 18, 1877; Plevna surrendered on December 10. At the opening of 1878 the Turks were completely prostrate. The road to Constantinople was clear. Before the English public had time to recover their breath and to observe what was taking place, the victorious armies of Russia were almost within sight of the minarets of Stamboul.

Meanwhile the English Government were taking momentous action. In the first days of 1878 Sir Henry Elliott, who had been Ambassador in Constantinople, was transferred to Vienna, and Mr. Layard, who had been Minister at Madrid, was sent to the Turkish capital to represent England there. This step was doubtless meant as an evidence that the English Government were determined to give to the Sultan an energetic support, but at the same time to exert their influence more decisively than before in compelling him to listen to reason and to friendly remonstrance. Mr. Layard was known to be a strong believer in Turkey; more Turkish in some respects than the Turks themselves. But he was a man of superabundant energy; of what might be described as boisterous energy. The Ottoman Government could not but accept his appointment as a new and stronger proof that the English Government were determined to stand their friend; but they ought to have accepted it too as evidence that the English Government were determined to use some pressure to make them amenable to reason. Unfortunately it would appear that the Sultan's Government accepted Mr. Layard's appointment in the one sense only and

not in the other. Parliament was called together at least a fortnight before the time usual during recent years. The Speech from the Throne announced that her Majesty could not conceal from herself that should the hostilities between Russia and Turkey unfortunately be prolonged 'some unexpected occurrence may render it incumbent on me to adopt measures of precaution.' This looked ominous to those who wished for peace, and it raised the spirits of the war party. There was a very large and a very noisy war party already in existence. It was particularly strong in London. It embraced some Liberals as well as nearly all Tories. It was popular in the music-halls and the public-houses of London. The class whom Prince Bismarck once called the 'gentlemen of the pavement,' were in its favour, at least in the metropolis, almost to a gentleman of the pavement. The men of action got a nickname. They were dubbed the Jingo Party. The term, applied as one of ridicule and reproach, was adopted by chivalrous Jingoes as a name of pride. The Jingoes of London, like the Beggars of Flanders, accepted the word of contumely as a title of honour. In order to avoid the possibility of any historical misunderstanding or puzzlement hereafter about the meaning of Jingo, such as we have heard of concerning that of Whig and Tory, it is well to explain how the term came into existence. Some Tyrtæus of the tap-tub, some Körner of the music-halls, had composed a ballad which was sung at one of these caves of harmony every night amid the tumultuous applause of excited patriots.

The refrain of this war-song contained the spirit-stirring words :—

We don't want to fight, but, by Jingo, if we do,
We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too.

Some one whose pulses this lyrical outburst of national pride failed to stir, called the party of its enthusiasts the Jingoes. The writer of this book is under the impression that the invention of the name belongs to Mr. George Jacob Holyoake ; but he declines to pledge his historical reputation to the fact. The name was caught up at once, and the party were universally known as the Jingoes. The famous adjuration of the lady in the 'Vicar of Wakefield' had proved to be too prophetical. She had sworn 'by the living Jingo ;' and now indeed the Jingo was alive.

The Government ordered the Mediterranean fleet to pass the Dardanelles and go up to Constantinople. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that he would ask for a supplementary estimate of six millions for naval and military purposes. Thereupon Lord Carnarvon, the Colonial Secretary, at once resigned. He had been anxious to get out of the Ministry before, but Lord Beaconsfield induced him to remain. He disapproved now so strongly of the despatch of the fleet to Constantinople and the supplementary vote, that he would not any longer defer his resignation. Lord Derby was also anxious to resign and indeed tendered his resignation, but he was prevailed upon to withdraw it. The fleet meanwhile was ordered back from the Dardanelles to Besika Bay. It had got as

far as the opening of the Straits when it was recalled. The Liberal Opposition in the House of Commons kept on protesting against the various war measures of the Government, but with little effect. The majority of the Government kept on increasing. The strength of that majority did not lie in mere Jingoism. There can be no doubt that a great many members of the House of Commons voted with Lord Beaconsfield in the sincere conviction that he was the man whom it was safest to trust, and that the protestations of pacific purpose which the Government were always making would be most likely to be realised if Lord Beaconsfield had full power to carry out the policy he thought best. While all this agitation in and out of Parliament was going on; while the Opposition was now proposing and now withdrawing amendments; while the Government were protesting their desire for peace, and the champions of the Government out of doors were screaming for war; while the music-halls were cheering for the great name of Jingo, and monster meetings in Hyde Park on either side of the question were turning into mere faction-fights, generally to the defeat and rout of the peace party, the news came that the Turks, utterly broken down, had been compelled to sign an armistice, and an agreement containing a basis of peace, at Adrianople. Then, following quickly on the heels of this announcement, came a report that the Russians, notwithstanding the armistice, were pushing on towards Constantinople with the intention of occupying the Turkish capital.

A cry of alarm and indignation broke out in London. One memorable night a sudden report reached the House of Commons that the Russians were actually in the suburbs of Constantinople. The House for a time almost entirely lost its head. The lobbies, the corridors, St. Stephen's hall, the great Westminster Hall itself, and Palace Yard beyond it, became filled with wildly excited and tumultuous crowds. If the clamour of the streets at that moment had been the voice of England, nothing could have prevented a declaration of war against Russia. Happily, however, it was proved that the rumour of Russian advance was unfounded. The fleet was now sent in good earnest through the Dardanelles, and anchored a few miles below Constantinople. Russia at first protested that if the English fleet passed the Straits Russian troops ought to occupy the city. Lord Derby was firm, and terms of arrangement were found—English troops were not to be disembarked and the Russians were not to advance. Russia was still open to negotiation.

Probably Russia had no idea of taking on herself the tremendous responsibility of an occupation of Constantinople. She had entered into a treaty with Turkey, the famous Treaty of San Stefano, by which she secured for the populations of the Christian provinces almost complete independence of Turkey, and was to create a great new Bulgarian State with a seaport on the Egean Sea. The English Government refused to recognise this treaty. Lord Derby contended that it involved an entire readjustment of the

Treaty of Paris, and that that could only be done with the sanction of the Great Powers assembled in Congress. Lord Beaconsfield openly declared that the Treaty of San Stefano would put the whole south-east of Europe directly under Russian influence. Russia offered to submit the Treaty to the perusal, if we may use the expression, of a Congress; but argued that the stipulations which merely concerned Turkey and herself, were for Turkey and herself to settle between them. This was obviously an untenable position. It is out of the question to suppose that, as long as European policy is conducted on its present principles, the Great Powers of the West could consent to allow Russia to force on Turkey any terms she might think proper. Turkey meanwhile kept feebly moaning that she had been coerced into signing the treaty. The Government determined to call out the Reserves, to summon a contingent of Indian troops to Europe, to occupy Cyprus, and to make an armed landing on the coast of Syria. All these resolves were not, however, made known at the time. Everyone felt sure that something important was going on, and public expectancy was strained to the full. On March 28, 1878, the House of Lords met as usual. Lord Derby was seen to come in and seat himself not with the Ministers on the front bench to the right of the Lord Chancellor, but below the gangway on the same side. This created some surprise; but for a moment some peers and strangers believed that he had only taken his seat there for the purpose of conversing with a friend

who sat behind. The Ministers came in one by one and took their places. The business of the House began. Lord Derby remained as before in a seat below the gangway, and then it was clear to everyone that he was no longer a member of the Government. In a few moments he rose and made his explanation. Measures, he said, had been resolved upon of which he could not approve, and he had therefore resigned his office. He did not give any explanation of the measures to which he objected. Lord Beaconsfield spoke a few words of good feeling and good taste after Lord Derby's announcement. He had hoped, he said, that Lord Derby would soon come to occupy the place of Prime Minister which he now held; he dwelt upon their long friendship. Not much was said on either side of what the Government were doing. The last hope of the Peace Party seemed to have vanished when Lord Derby left his office.

Lord Salisbury was made Foreign Minister. He was succeeded in the India office by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, now created Lord Cranbrook. Colonel Stanley, brother of Lord Derby, took the office of Minister of War in Lord Cranbrook's place. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach had already become Secretary for the Colonies on the resignation of Lord Carnarvon. The post of Irish Secretary had been given to Mr. James Lowther, an unfortunate appointment, as it afterwards proved. Lord Salisbury's first act in the office of Foreign Secretary, was to issue a circular in which he declared that it would be impossible for England to

enter a congress which was not free to consider the whole of the provisions of the Treaty of San Stefano. The very day after Parliament had adjourned for the Easter recess, the Indian Government received orders to send certain of their troops to Malta. This was a complete surprise to the country. We may anticipate matters a little by saying that nothing in the end did more harm to Lord Beaconsfield's Government than his constant practice of taking the country by surprise. Some of his more vulgar admirers were delighted by these successive sensations. They thought it highly agreeable to be ruled by a minister who had always something new to amuse and excite them. But the common sense of the country was painfully shaken by these galvanic shocks administered every now and then. The summoning of the troops to Malta became the occasion also for a very serious controversy on a grave constitutional question. It was debated in both Houses of Parliament. The Opposition contended that the constitutional principle which left it for Parliament to fix the number of soldiers the Crown might maintain in England, was reduced to nothingness if the Prime Minister could at any moment, without even consulting Parliament, draw what reinforcements he thought fit from the almost limitless resources of India. No reasonable person can deny the justice of this argument. It only needs to be stated in order to enforce itself. The majority then supporting Lord Beaconsfield were not, however, much disposed to care about argument or

reason. They were willing to approve of any step Lord Beaconsfield might think fit to take.

Prince Bismarck had often during these events shown an inclination to exhibit himself in the new attitude of a peaceful mediator. He now interposed again and issued invitations for a congress to be held in Berlin to discuss the whole contents of the Treaty of San Stefano. After some delay, discussion, and altercation, Russia agreed to accept the invitation on the conditions proposed, and it was finally resolved that a Congress should assemble in Berlin on the approaching June 13. To this Congress it was supposed by most persons that Lord Salisbury would be sent to represent England. Much to the surprise of the public, Lord Beaconsfield announced that he himself would attend, accompanied by Lord Salisbury, and conduct the negotiations in Berlin. The event was we believe without precedent. Never before had an English Prime Minister left the country whilst Parliament was sitting to act as the representative of England in a foreign capital. The part he had undertaken to play suited Lord Beaconsfield's love for the picturesque and the theatrical. It seemed a proper culmination to his career that he should take his seat at a great European Council chamber, and there help in dictating terms of peace to Europe. The temptation was irresistible to a nature so fond of show, and state, and pomp. Lord Beaconsfield went to Berlin. His journey thither was a sort of triumphal progress. At every great city, almost at every railway station, as he passed, crowds turned out,

drawn partly by curiosity, partly by admiration, to see the English statesman whose strange and varied career had so long excited the wondering attention of Europe. The Congress was held in the Radzivill Palace, a building with a plain unpretending exterior in one of the principal streets of Berlin, and then in the occupation of Prince Bismarck. The Prince himself presided, and it is said, departed from the usual custom of diplomatic assemblages by opening the proceedings in English. The use of our language was understood to be a kindly and somewhat patronising deference to the English Prime Minister, whose knowledge of spoken French was supposed to have fallen somewhat into decay of late years. The Congress discussed the whole or nearly the whole of the questions opened up by the recent war. Greece claimed to be heard there, and after some delay and some difficulty was allowed to plead in her own cause.

The Congress of Berlin had to deal with four or five great distinct questions. It had to deal with the condition of the Provinces or States nominally under the suzerainty of Turkey. It had then to deal with the populations of alien race and religion actually under Turkey's dominion. It had to take into its consideration the claims of the Greeks; that is, of the kingdom of Greece for extended frontier, and of the Greek populations under Turkey for a different system of rule. Finally it had to deal with the Turkish possessions in Asia. The great object of most of the statesmen who were concerned in the preparation of

the Treaty which came of the Congress, was to open for the Christian populations of the South-east of Europe a way into gradual self-development and independence. But on the other hand it must be owned that the object of some of the Powers, and especially, we are afraid, of the English Government, was rather to maintain the Ottoman Government than to care for the future of the Christian races. These two influences acting and counteracting on each other produced the Treaty of Berlin. That Treaty recognised the complete independence of Roumania, of Servia, and of Montenegro, subject only to certain stipulations with regard to religious equality in each of these States. To Montenegro it gave a seaport and a slip of territory attaching to it. Thus one great object of the mountaineers was accomplished. They were able to reach the sea. The Treaty created, north of the Balkans, a State of Bulgaria : a much smaller Bulgaria than that sketched in the Treaty of San Stefano. Bulgaria was to be a self-governing State tributary to the Sultan and owning his suzerainty, but in other respects practically independent. It was to be governed by a Prince whom the population were to elect with the assent of the Great Powers and the confirmation of the Sultan. It was stipulated that no member of any reigning dynasty of the Great European Powers should be eligible as a candidate. South of the Balkans, the Treaty created another and a different kind of State, under the name of Eastern Roumelia. That State was to remain under the direct political and military authority of the Sultan,

but it was to have, as to its interior condition, a sort of 'administrative autonomy,' as the favourite diplomatic phrase then was. East Roumelia was to be ruled by a Christian Governor, and there was a stipulation that the Sultan should not employ any irregular troops, such as the Circassians and the Bashi-bazouks, in the garrisons of the frontier. The European Powers were to arrange in concert with the Porte for the organisation of this new State. As regarded Greece, it was arranged that the Sultan and the King of the Hellenes were to come to some understanding for a modification of the Greek frontier, and that if they could not arrange this between themselves, the Great Powers were to have the right of offering, that is to say in plain words of insisting on, their mediation. The Sultan also undertook 'scrupulously to apply to Crete the organic law of 1868.' Bosnia and the Herzegovina were to be occupied and administered by Austria. Roumania undertook, or in other words was compelled to undertake, to return to Russia that portion of Bessarabian territory which had been detached from Russia by the Treaty of Paris. Roumania was to receive in compensation some islands forming the Delta of the Danube, and a portion of the Dobrudscha. As regarded Asia, the Porte was to cede to Russia, Ardahan, Kars, and Batoum with its great port on the Black Sea.

The Treaty of Berlin gave rise to keen and adverse criticism. Much complaint was made of the curious arrangement which divided the Bulgarian populations into two separate States under wholly

different systems of government. This, it was said, is only the example of the Congress of Paris over again. It is just such another futile attempt as that which was made to keep the Danubian principalities separate from each other in the hope of thereby diminishing the influence of Russia, and securing greater influence for Turkey. The simple and natural arrangement, it was urged, would have been to unite the whole of these populations at once under one form of government. To that, it was insisted, they must come in the end, and the interval of separation is only more likely to be successfully employed by Russia in spreading her influence, because each division of the population is so small as to be unable to offer any effective resistance to her advances. On the other hand, it was argued by the supporters of the Treaty, that the Bulgarian question was not so simple and straightforward as might have been supposed; that there was a considerable variety of races, of religions, and of interests enclosed in what some people chose to call Bulgaria, and that no better arrangement could be found than to keep one portion still under the protection of the Porte, while allowing to the other something that might almost be styled independence. The arrangement which gave Bosnia and Herzegovina to the occupation of Austria became afterwards the subject of sharp controversy. The Prime Minister himself at a later day actually declared that this step was taken in order to put another Power, not Russia, on the high road to Constantinople if the succession to the Porte should ever become vacant. On the

other hand Austrian statesmen themselves denied that any such intention was in the mind of the Emperor of Austria. They insisted that the occupation was accepted by Austria out of no feeling of individual advantage, but on the contrary, at much inconvenience and some sacrifice, and solely in the interest of the common peace of Europe. Very bitter indeed was the controversy provoked by the surrender to Russia of the Bessarabian territory taken from her at the time of the Crimean War. Roumania, the gallant and spirited little State which had thriven surprisingly under her new system of government, was thus plundered in order to satisfy Russia's self-love. Russia had set her heart upon recovering every single one of the advantages, real or only nominal, which she had been compelled to sacrifice at the close of the Crimean War. This was the last remnant of the victory obtained over her at so much cost and after such a struggle by the combined Powers of the West. Now she had regained everything. The Black Sea was open to her war vessels, and its shores to her arsenals. The last slight trace of Crimean humiliation was effaced in the restoration of the territory of Bessarabia. Profound disappointment was caused among many European populations, as well as among the Greeks themselves, by the arrangements for the rectification of the Greek frontier. The impression left in the minds of the Greek delegates was that the influence of the English Ministers had in every instance been given in favour of Turkey and against the claims of Greece. Thus,

speaking roughly, it may be said that the effect of the Congress of Berlin on the mind of Europe was to make the Christian populations of the south-east believe that their friend was Russia and their enemies were England and Turkey; to make the Greeks believe that France was their especial friend, and that England was their enemy; and to create an uncomfortable impression everywhere that the whole Congress was a pre-arranged business, a transaction with a foregone conclusion, a dramatic performance carefully rehearsed before in all its details and merely enacted as a pageant on the Berlin stage.

The latter impression was converted into a conviction by certain subsequent revelations. It came out that Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury had been entering into secret engagements both with Russia and with Turkey. The secret engagement with Russia was the occasion of a good deal of scandal. The secret engagement was prematurely divulged by the heedlessness or the treachery of a person who had been called in at a small temporary rate of pay to assist in copying despatches in the Foreign Office. The authenticity of his revelation was denied in the first instance with what appeared to be genuine earnestness, but it came out that the denial was a mere quibble as to the meaning of the word 'authentic.' The version of the agreement thus prematurely published by the *Globe*, a London evening paper, was to all intents and purposes perfectly genuine. The secret Treaty proved to be almost exactly as it had been described in advance. It was signed at the Foreign Office on May 30,

some days before Prince Bismarck issued his invitation to the Congress. It was a memorandum determining the points on which an understanding had been come to between Russia and Great Britain, and a mutual engagement for the English and Russian plenipotentiaries at the Congress. It bound England to put up with the handing back of Bessarabia and the cession of the port of Batoum. It conceded all the points in advance which the English people believed that their plenipotentiaries had been making brave struggle for at Berlin. Lord Beaconsfield had not then frightened Russia into accepting the Congress on his terms. The call of the Indian troops to Malta had not done the business ; nor the reserves, nor the vote of the six millions. Russia had gone into the Congress because Lord Salisbury had made a secret engagement with her that she should have what she specially wanted. The Congress was only a piece of pompous and empty ceremonial.

Another secret engagement was that entered into with Turkey. The English Government undertook to guarantee to Turkey her Asiatic possessions against all invasion on condition that Turkey handed over to England the island of Cyprus for her occupation. Lord Beaconsfield afterwards explained that Cyprus was to be used as ' a place of arms ;' in other words, England had now formally pledged herself to defend and secure Turkey against all invasion or aggression, and occupied Cyprus in order to have a more effectual vantage ground from which to carry on this project. The difference, therefore, between the policy

of the Conservative Government and the policy of the Liberals was now thrown into the strongest possible relief. Mr. Gladstone, and those who thought with him, had always made it a principle of their policy that England had no special and separate interest in maintaining the independence of Turkey. Lord Beaconsfield now declared it to be the cardinal principle of his policy that England specially, England above all, was concerned to maintain the integrity and the independence of the Turkish Empire ; that in fact the security of Turkey was as much part of the duty of English statesmanship as the security of the Channel Islands or of Malta.

For the moment the policy of Lord Beaconsfield seemed to be entirely in the ascendant. His return home was celebrated with pomp and circumstance befitting the temperament of the statesman, if not indeed quite becoming of such an occasion. The Prime Minister got a great public reception in London. Crowds awaited him at the railway station, which was gaudily decorated and bedizened for the occasion. He made a conquering hero's progress through the streets. Arrived at the Foreign Office, he addressed from the windows an excited and tumultuous crowd, and he proclaimed, in words which became memorable, that he had brought back 'Peace with Honour.' This, so far as human eye can yet see, was the climax of that strange career. From the day when Mr. Disraeli first addressed the electors of Wycombe, from the day when his first speech was hooted and laughed at in the House of Commons, up

to this triumphal reception in the streets of London, and this oration from the windows of the Foreign Office, what a distance he had traversed! Years of struggle against what seemed almost insurmountable difficulties; years of steady faith in himself undisturbed by almost universal ridicule; years of rise and fall, of action and reaction, of success and disaster, had conducted him appropriately to this climax. At this moment he was probably the most conspicuous public man in the world, unless we make one single exception in favour of Prince Bismarck. He had attained to a position of almost unrivalled popularity in England. Not even in his most successful days was Lord Palmerston ever pursued by such a clamour of noisy public acclamation. The head of the English Prime Minister might well have been turned as he stood at the window of the Foreign Office and addressed his few oracular words to the crowd, and heard the wild cheering which followed, and knew that all the world had its eyes then fixed on that single figure. He ought to have followed classic advice and sacrificed at that moment his dearest possession to the gods. No man without sacrifice could buy the lease of such a position, and the endurance of such a success.

Meanwhile, so far as could be judged by external symptoms, and in the metropolis, Mr. Gladstone and his followers were down to their lowest depth, their very zero of unpopularity. The London morning newspapers, with the one conspicuous exception of the *Daily News*, were entirely on the side

of Lord Beaconsfield. Indeed, with the exception of the *Daily News* and the *Echo*, there were no London daily papers of any literary name, no daily papers lying on club tables, which had not declared themselves emphatically in support of Lord Beaconsfield against Mr. Gladstone. The cheap weekly papers, which were read by hundreds of thousands of the working population, were not known to the calculations of society. Nor did society concern itself much about the public opinion of the provinces. In the Midland Counties, and still more especially in the North of England, the condition of public feeling was somewhat different from that of London. In the provinces men examined more coolly the political conditions. They were not carried away by the gossip of the House of Commons and the clubs, and the influence of that which in London is called society. In the provinces on the whole, Liberalism still remained popular. Mr. Gladstone would still have been sure of the cheers of a great provincial meeting. But there came a day in London when, passing with his wife through one of the streets, he was compelled to seek the shelter of a friendly hall-door in order to escape from the threatening demonstrations of a little mob of patriots boisterously returning from a Jingo carnival.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE ANTI-CLIMAX OF IMPERIALISM.

During the excitement caused by the preparations for the Congress of Berlin a long career came quietly to a close. On May 28, 1878, Lord Russell died at his residence, Pembroke Lodge, Richmond. He may be said to have faded out of life, to have ceased to live, rather than to have died, so quiet, gradual, almost imperceptible was the passing away. Not many days before his death, on May 9, a deputation of representative and distinguished Nonconformists had waited upon him to present him with an address on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, a reform of which he was the great promoter. Lord Russell was not able to receive the deputation; his wife and son spoke for him. He had not for some time taken any active part in public affairs. We have already in this book spoken of his political career as closed. Now and then some public event aroused his attention, and he addressed a letter to one of the newspapers. He wrote as a man speaks, who, sinking quietly and gradually into death, is suddenly roused to interest in the affairs of the living by catching some words of a half-whispered conversation around him, and who

murmurs some sentences of faint remonstrance or advice. There was something strangely pathetic in these utterances, with their imperfect application to the actual condition of things around, and the testimony they bore to the fading man's inextinguishable interest in the progress of living history. To the last moments of his life Lord Russell refused to surrender wholly his concern in the affairs of men. The world listened respectfully to these few occasional words from one who had borne a leader's part in some of the greatest political struggles of the century, and who still from the very edge of the grave was anxious to offer his whisper of counsel or of warning. No one felt bound to weigh too carefully the substantial and practical value of the advice, under the altered conditions of that actual time to which Lord Russell could hardly be said to belong any more. His had been on the whole a great career. He had not only lived through great changes, he had helped to accomplish some of the greatest changes his time had known. His life was singularly unselfish. He was often eager and pushing where he believed that he saw his way to do something needful, and men confounded the zeal of a cause with the eagerness of personal ambition. He never cared for money, and his original rank raised him above any possible consideration for enhanced social distinction. He had made many mistakes; but those who knew him best prized most highly both his political capacity and his personal character. His later years were made happy and smooth by all that the love of a

household could do. He had lost a son, a young man of much political promise, Lord Amberley, who died in 1876; but on the whole he had suffered less in his later time than is commonly the lot of those who live to extreme old age. The time of his death was in a certain sense appropriate. His public career had just begun at the time of the Congress of Vienna; it closed with the preparations for the Congress of Berlin.

Why did not Lord Beaconsfield sacrifice to the gods his dearest possession, his political majority, immediately after the triumphal return from Berlin? The opinion of nearly all who pretended to form a judgment was, that at that time the great majority of the constituents were with him. He seemed to have reached the zenith of his own power, and to have accomplished that object which is held so dear by a certain class of Englishmen, that of making the influence of England predominant over the councils of Europe. It is said that he was strongly advised by some of his northern supporters not to put the country then to the cost of a general election. Trade had been depressed for some time. The depression was due in the first instance to causes which had no concern with politics, but it had of course been made much deeper by the anxiety and uneasiness which the too enterprising policy of the Government kept alive in these countries. It was, therefore, strongly pressed on Lord Beaconsfield that especially in the northern counties, where he had many influential supporters, the drain caused by bad trade had been

so heavy that it would be unfair to hasten a dissolution, and thus impose large and at that time unnecessary cost on the constituencies. Whatever the reason may have been, the expected dissolution did not take place, and from that time Lord Beaconsfield never had any chance of a successful appeal to the country. From that time the popularity of his Government began to go down and down. Many things were against them for which they were not responsible, many things for which they had made themselves distinctly responsible. The badness of trade and the general depression were no fault of theirs to begin with, but, as we have just said, they aggravated every evil of this kind by the strain on which they kept the expectation of the country. Their domestic policy had not been successful. They had attempted many large measures and failed to carry them through. They had not satisfied the country party, to whom they owed so much. The malt tax remained a grievance, as it had been for generations. The Government had got into trouble with the Home Rule party. Mr. Butt had been failing in physical power and in influence for some time. His place as a leader had long been practically disputed by Mr. Parnell, and was evidently about to be taken by him. Mr. Parnell, a young man but lately come into Parliament, soon proved himself the most remarkable politician who had arisen on the field of Irish politics since the day when John Mitchel was conveyed away from Dublin to Bermuda. The tactics adopted by Mr. Parnell annoyed and discredited the Government

Good-natured men of respectable ability and no great force of character, like Sir Stafford Northcote, were wholly unable to cope with the pertinacity and policy of such an antagonist. The country blamed the Ministry, it scarcely knew why, for the manner in which the policy called obstructive had been allowed to come into force. It was evident that a new chapter in Irish agitation was opening, and those who disliked the prospect felt inclined to lay the blame on the Government, as if, because they happened to be in office, they must be responsible for everything that took place during their official reign. All these influences combined were telling against Lord Beaconsfield's administration. Perhaps had he been still in the House of Commons, and still in the possession of his full physical vigour, he might have done something to maintain the credit of his Government. But in the quiet shelter of the House of Lords he could only now and then make a show speech in which he usually succeeded in convincing the public of his entire independence and isolation from the policy and the purposes of his colleagues. Scarcely ever was a Ministerial explanation of any important part of the Government policy given in the House of Commons without its being followed by some explanation breathing a totally different spirit, and conveyed in utterly different words, from the lips of Lord Beaconsfield. In the House of Commons, Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Cross almost invariably endeavoured to minimise and reduce to the most practicable limits the objects of the foreign policy of the Government.

In the House of Lords, the Prime Minister almost invariably endeavoured to magnify his office and his mission, and to insist upon it that every step taken by him in Foreign affairs was part of a great, new, ambitious, and imperial policy. Most of all, the Ministry suffered from the effect produced upon the country by the smaller wars into which they had plunged.

The first of these was the invasion of Afghanistan. This was part of the great Imperial policy which Lord Lytton was sent to carry out in India. The Government determined to send a mission to Shere Ali, one of the sons of Dost Mahomed, and then the ruler of Cabul. During the time when it was still uncertain whether England and Russia would not be at war, the Russian Government appear to have sent an envoy of their own to Cabul with the object no doubt of obtaining the direct or indirect assistance of Shere Ali. The English Government determined to guard against possible danger for the future by establishing a distinct and paramount influence in Afghanistan. Shere Ali strongly objected to receive either a mission or a permanent Resident. The mission was sent forward. It was so numerous as to look rather like an army than an embassy. It started from Peshawur on September 21, 1878, but was stopped on the frontier by an officer of Shere Ali who objected to its passing through until he had received authority from his master. This delay was magnified, by the news first received here, into an insolent rebuff. The unlucky performance which had been attempted in France, in 1870, was by chance, or

error, or purpose, enacted over again on a small scale in England. The English Envoy was made to play the part of the French Ambassador, and the passion of the English people for the moment became inflamed with the idea of an insult to the English flag. The Envoy was ordered to go on, and before long the mission was turned into an invasion. The Afghans made but a poor resistance, and the English troops soon occupied Cabul. Shere Ali fled from his capital. One portion of our forces occupied Candahar. Lord Beaconsfield announced that the object of the invasion in Afghanistan was satisfactorily accomplished; that England was now in possession of the three great highways which connected Afghanistan with India, that he hoped the country would long remain in possession of them, and that it had secured a frontier which would render the Indian Empire invulnerable. Shere Ali died, and Yakoob Khan, his son, became his successor. Yakoob Khan presented himself at the British camp which had now been established at Gandamak, a place between Jellalabad and Cabul. Here the Treaty of Gandamak was signed on May 5, 1879. The Indian Government undertook by this Treaty to pay the Ameer 60,000*l.* a year, and the Ameer ceded, or appeared to cede, what Lord Beaconsfield called the 'scientific frontier,' and agreed to admit a British representative to reside in Cabul. On those conditions he was to be supported against any foreign enemy with money and arms, and if necessary, with men. Hardly had the country ceased clapping its hands and exulting over the quiet establishment of an

English Resident at Cabul when a telegram arrived announcing that the events of November, 1841, had repeated themselves that city. The tragedy of Sir Alexander Burnes was enacted over again. Down almost to its smallest details that terrible drama was played once more. Only the actors were new. A popular rising took place in Cabul exactly as had happened in 1841. Sir Louis Cavagnari, the English Envoy, and all or nearly all the members of his staff were murdered. There was nothing to be done for it but to invade Cabul over again, and take vengeance for the massacre of the English officers. The British troops hurried up, fought their way with their usual success, and on the Christmas eve of 1879 Cabul was again entered. Yakoob Khan, accused of complicity in the massacre, was sent as a prisoner to India, possibly, as was then thought, to await his trial for a share in the murder. Cabul was occupied, but not possessed. The English Government held in their power just as much of Afghanistan as they could cover with their encampments. They held it for just so long as they kept the encampments standing. The Treaty of Gandamak was of course nothing but waste paper. The scientific frontier had not even been defined. It was to have been provided for in a supplementary document to the Treaty, which was to set forth its precise line and extent. This part of the business was never accomplished, and the terms of the bond, so far as they had any real existence at all, were washed off the paper in the blood of Sir Louis Cavagnari. We had got into Afghanistan.

There now remained a far greater difficulty—to get out of it. 'Blood will have blood,' says Macbeth.

The war in South Africa was, if possible, less justifiable. It was also, if possible, more disastrous. The region which we call South Africa consisted of several States, native and European, under various forms of authority. Cape Colony and Natal were for a long time the only English dominions. The Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic were Dutch settlements. In 1848, the British Government had established its authority over the Orange River territory, but it afterwards transferred its powers to a provisional Government of Dutch origin. The Transvaal was a Dutch Republic with which we had until quite lately no direct connection. In 1852, the English Government resolved that its operations and its responsibilities in South Africa should be limited to Cape Colony and Natal, and distinctly recognised the independence of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic. Besides these States of what we may call European origin, there were a great many native communities, some of which had enough of organisation to be almost regarded as States. The Kaffirs, as we all know, had often given us trouble before. The supposed insurrection of Langalibalele had been suppressed in 1874 with great severity, and Langalibalele had himself been captured, tried, and imprisoned. The almost universal opinion of independent observers was that Langalibalele had not intended insurrection, and that he had been unfairly and unjustly dealt with. It is important to mention

the fact here, because there can be no doubt that the treatment of Langalibalele had considerable influence on the minds of others of the native chiefs. The most powerful tribe in South Africa was that of the Zulus. Natal was divided from Zulu territory only by the River Tugela. The ruler of the Zulu tribe, Cetewayo, owed his throne to a great victory which he obtained over his brother, who was killed in the battle along with some three thousand of his adherents. Cetewayo was much inclined to a cordial alliance with the English, and was anxious to receive his crown as a kind of gift at our hands. Although he did not owe his power in any direct sense to us, yet he went through a form, in which our Representatives bore their part, of accepting his crown at the hands of the English Sovereign. He was often involved in disputes with the Boers, or Dutch-descended occupants of the Transvaal Republic. Other native tribes were still more directly and often engaged in quarrels with the Boers. The Transvaal Republic made war upon one of the greatest of these African Chiefs, Secocoeni, and had the worst of it in the struggle. The Republic was badly managed in every way. Its military operations were a total failure; its exchequer was ruined; there seemed hardly any chance of maintaining order within its frontier, and the prospect appeared at the time to be that its South African enemies would overrun the whole of the Republic; would thus come up to the borders of the English States, and possibly might soon involve the English settlers themselves in war. Under these conditions

a certain number of disappointed or alarmed inhabitants of the Transvaal made some kind of indirect proposition to England that the Republic should be annexed to English territory. Sir Theophilus Shepstone was sent out by England to ascertain whether this offer was genuine and national. He seems to have been entirely mistaken in his appreciation of the condition of things. Acting under the impression that the Boers were willing to accept English authority, he boldly, one might say lawlessly, declared the Republic a portion of the dominions of Great Britain. Meanwhile there had been a dispute going on for a long time between Cetewayo, the Zulu King, and the Transvaal Republic about a certain disputed strip of land. The dispute was referred to the arbitration of England, with whom Cetewayo was then on the most friendly terms. Four English arbitrators decided that the disputed strip of territory properly belonged to the Zulu nation.

Meanwhile, Sir Bartle Frere was sent out as Lord High Commissioner. From the moment of his appearance on the scene the whole state of affairs seems to have undergone a complete change. Sir Bartle Frere kept back the award of the arbitrators for several months, unwilling to hand over any new territory unconditionally to Cetewayo, whom he regarded as a dangerous enemy and an unscrupulous despot. During this time a hostile feeling was growing up in the mind of Cetewayo. It was not mere enmity; it was chiefly a fear that some treachery was being planned against him. He could not but see

that a total change had taken place in the demeanour of the English Representatives since the occupation of the Transvaal. He had constantly before his mind the fate of Langalibalele. He appears to have really become mastered by the conviction that the English were determined to find a pretext for making war on him, for annexing his territory, and for sending him to prison, as had been done to Langalibalele. When such a feeling as this exists on one side or the other, it is easy to imagine that cause of complaint must soon arise. On the English side there was an inclination to regard as offensive preparations which Cetewayo insisted he meant purely as measures of defence. Sir Bartle Frere was a man who had many times rendered great service to England. He had been Chief Commissioner in Scinde from 1852 to 1859, and had shown great ability and energy during the Indian Mutiny. Since that he had been one of the Council of the Viceroy of India ; he had been for some years Governor of Bombay, and he had been appointed to the Council of the Secretary of the State here at home. He had been sent upon an important mission to the Sultan of Zanzibar in 1872, the object of which was to endeavour to obtain the suppression of the slave trade, and he succeeded. The Sultan entered into a treaty for the putting down of the trade, and coming to London in 1875 was the small 'fulvus leo' or 'tawny lion' of a season. Sir Bartle Frere seems to have been really filled with that imperial instinct about which other men only talked. He seems to have had in him something of the Cromwell combined perhaps with a

good deal of the William Penn. His was a strong nature with an imperious will and an inexhaustible energy. He was undoubtedly conscientious and high-principled according to his lights. Given a great field of action, it is possible that he might have made a deep mark upon the history of his time. The fortune which lately confined his energies to South Africa turned almost into the ridiculous what might, under more favourable conditions, have been the sublime. He appears to have been influenced by two strong ambitions: to spread the Gospel and to extend the territory of England. It is said that in Asia he saw little opportunity for promulgating Christianity, and that he yearned for Africa as a more promising scene for such a labour. In Africa his mind appears to have become at once possessed with the conviction that alike for the safety of the whites and the improvement of the coloured races it would be necessary to extend the government of England over the whole southern portion of that continent, and to efface the boundaries of native tribes by blending them all into one imperial confederation.

Cetewayo seems to have had considerable military ability and a certain degree of political intelligence. His position made him a rival to Sir Bartle Frere's policy, and Sir Bartle Frere appears to have made up his mind that these two stars were not to keep their motion in one sphere, and that South Africa was not to brook the double rule of the English commissioner and the Zulu king. Sir Bartle Frere kept the award of the four English arbitrators in his hands for some

months without taking any action upon it, and when he did at length announce it to Cetewayo he accompanied it with an ultimatum declaring that the Zulu army must at once be disbanded and must return to their homes. This was in point of fact a declaration of war. The English troops immediately invaded the Zulu country, and almost the first news that reached England of the progress of the war was the story of the complete and terrible defeat of an English force on January 22, 1879. Not within the memory of any living man had so sudden and complete a disaster fallen upon English arms. Englishmen were wholly unused to the very idea of English troops being defeated in the field. The story that an English force had been surprised, out-generaled, outfought, completely defeated by half-naked savages, came on the country with a shock never felt since at least the time of the disasters of Cabul and the Jugdulluk Pass. Of course the disaster was retrieved. Lord Chelmsford, the Commander-in-Chief (son of the Lord Chelmsford just dead who had been twice Lord Chancellor), only wanted time, in homely language, to pull himself together in order to recover his position. The war soon came to the end which everyone must have expected, first the defeat of the Zulu king and then his capture.

One melancholy incident made the war memorable not only to England but to Europe. The young French Prince Louis Napoleon who had studied in English military schools, felt a strong desire to vary the somewhat mournful monotony of his life

by taking part in the campaign. He was influenced in some measure by a desire to fight under the English flag; but it must be owned that he was influenced much more strongly by a wish to play to a French popular audience. He persuaded himself that it would greatly increase his chances of recovering the throne of France if he could exhibit himself to the eyes of the French public as a bold and brilliant young soldier. He therefore seized the opportunity of the Zulu campaign to offer his services, and attach himself as a volunteer to Lord Chelmsford's staff. During one of the episodes of the war he and some of his companions were surprised by a body of Zulus. Others escaped, but Prince Louis Napoleon was killed. The news of his death created a great shock in England. Everyone was sorry for the young gallant life so uselessly thrown away. Still more deep was the regret felt for the position of the bereaved mother. Hardly has any history a tale more tragic than hers. So sudden and splendid an elevation, so brilliant a career, so complete a fall, such an accumulation of sorrow, is hardly equalled even in the story of Marie Antoinette. Now in the autumn of her life she was left absolutely alone. Youth, beauty, Imperial throne, husband, son, all were gone. It was natural that considerations such as these should throw a halo of melancholy romance round the fate of the young Prince Louis Napoleon, and should rouse in this country an amount of sympathy which harsher critics condemned as sentimental, and even as maudlin. It must be admitted that the poor young

Prince fell in a quarrel which was not his, in which he had neither right nor duty to interfere, and which he had taken on himself with a purely personal and political motive. Princes in exile have many times borne arms in quarrels not their own. It is one of the privileges and one of the consolations of exile thus to be enabled to lend a helping hand to a foreign cause. But then the cause must be great and just; it must have some noble principle to inspire it. When the Orleanist Princes fought under the flag of the United States, they were contending for a principle dear to the lovers of freedom in every country in the world, a principle which it is the part of a Frenchman as well as an American to sustain. But the Zulu war was not in any sense a war of principle. It was not even a national English war. It was not a war with which the English people had any sympathy whatever. It was not even a war of which the English Government approved. For it is a strange peculiarity of this chapter of our history that the policy of Sir Bartle Frere and the war in Zululand were condemned by no one more strongly than by the members of her Majesty's Government in England. The despatches sent out to Sir Bartle Frere were constantly despatches of remonstrance and complaint, even of condemnation. When Prince Louis Napoleon therefore thrust himself into this quarrel, he withdrew himself from any just claim to general sympathy. Regret for the sudden extinction of a young life of promise was but natural, and that regret was freely given; but the verdict of the public

remained unaltered. He had thrown away his life uselessly in a quarrel which brought no honour, and for a motive which was not unselfish and was not exalted.

Cetewayo was captured and sent into imprisonment. His territory was divided amongst the leading native chiefs. A portion of it was given to an Englishman, John Dunn, who had settled in the country very young, and who had become a sort of potentate among the Zulus. Secocoeni, another South African chief, was also conquered and captured; and order in a certain sense might be said to reign in South Africa once more. Nothing, however, that the Government had done was so unfortunate for them in popular estimation as the official sanction they were compelled to give to the policy of Sir Bartle Frere. The war, although it had ended in a practical success, was none the less regarded by the English public as a blunder and a disaster. The loss of English life had been terrible, and worse than the mere loss of life was the fact that lives had been thrown away to no purpose. Hardly in any part of the country or amongst any class of politicians was there the least sympathy felt with the policy which had made the war. Quiet lookers-on began to feel that now at last the Imperialistic principle had reached its anti-climax, that the Elizabethan revival was turned into a burlesque. Even the Afghan enterprise, objectionable though it was in almost every way, did not affect the popularity of the Government so much as the Zulu war. The plain common sense of England held that

Sir Bartle Frere, however high and conscientious his motives may have been, was in the wrong from first to last, and that the cause of Cetewayo was on the whole a cause of fairness and of justice. The whole quarrel was so small, so miserable, that no pulse, even of Imperialistic veins, could stir with any exultation at the tidings of supposed success. It seemed ignoble work for English soldiers to be engaged in a war against a simple savage like the Zulu King. Nor did anyone feel the least assurance that a permanent peace had been obtained for Southern Africa, even at the cost of all this shame and blood. The Transvaal difficulty remained still unsettled. The native tribes might at any time or any chance coalesce in force sufficient to oppose us. We were threatened everywhere with fresh and useless responsibilities. We had now an African Question as well as an Eastern Question. Even the music-halls of London rang with no plaudits to songs in praise of the South African campaign. England had gone into the war against her conscience; she came out of it not triumphant, but regretful and ashamed—a 'victor that hath lost in gain.' The attitude of the Government seemed one of mere penitence. Cetewayo in his prison looked a much more respectable figure for history than the Minister whose unfortunate task it was to defend the policy which he had never approved, but which he had not strength of mind enough firmly to resist at the beginning. On the Government fell the burden of Sir Bartle Frere's responsibilities, without Sir Bartle Frere's consoling and self-sufficing belief in

the justice of his cause and the genuineness of his enterprise.

The distress in the country was growing deeper and deeper day by day. Some of the most important trades were suffering heavily. The winter of 1878 had been long and bitter, and there had been practically no summer. The manufacturing and mining districts almost everywhere over the country were borne down by the failure of business. The working classes were in genuine distress. In Ireland there was a forecast of something almost approaching to famine. When distress affects the trade and the population of a country, the first impulse is always to find fault with the reigning Government. Lord Beaconsfield's supporters many times asked in anger and scorn whether Her Majesty's ministers were responsible for the bad weather. The answer which most people gave either in words or in thought was sound in its general logic. Her Majesty's ministers, they said, are not responsible for the seasons, but they are responsible for a policy which adds to bad seasons the burden of unnecessary wars.

The authority of the Government in the House of Commons was greatly shaken. Sir Stafford Northcote had not the strength necessary to make a successful leader. Like most men who want natural firmness, he occasionally put forth little efforts of a sort of petulant determination. He generally tried to be strong where he should have been yielding, and was almost invariably compelled to be yielding where he ought to have been strong. The result

was that the House of Commons was becoming demoralised. The Government brought in a scheme for university education in Ireland, which was nothing better than a mutilation of Mr. Gladstone's rejected bill. It was carried through both Houses in a few weeks, because the Government were anxious to do something which might have the appearance of conciliating the Irish people without going far enough in that direction to estrange their Conservative supporters. The measure thus devised had exactly the opposite effect from that which was intended. It estranged a good many Conservative supporters ; it roused a new feeling of hostility amongst the Nonconformists, and it did not concede enough to the demands of the Irish Catholics to be of any use in the way of conciliation. It was plain that the mandate, to use a French phrase, of the Parliament was nearly out. The session of 1879 was its sixth session ; it would only be possible to have one session more. Louder and louder grew the cry from the Liberal side for the Government at once to go to the country. An argument more ingenious than substantial was got up to show that a Government is bound to dissolve before the legal mandate of the Parliament has run out. Mr. Gladstone, in especial, endeavoured to prove that there ought always to be a kind of spare session left,—a reserve session, which the Government might use if they were driven by actual necessity, but which as a rule should not be turned to any account. In other words, Mr. Gladstone contended that if seven years be the legal

mandate of a Parliament, it should be an understood principle that a dissolution should not be put off longer than the close of the sixth session. There seems nothing particularly satisfactory in the argument. It is reasonable to contend that the term of seven years is too long for the duration of a Parliament. There is much to be said in favour of compelling members to meet their constituents more often than once in seven years. The fact is, that no Parliament ever does last seven years. It might be convenient and just to declare by legislation that its tenure shall be only for six, for five, or even for three years ; but it certainly seems clear that, whatever be the legal term of a Parliament, it ought to be considered fairly within the right of a Government not to dissolve before the expiration of the full time if no occasion should arise to call for a prompter dissolution.

In this particular instance, however, the persistency with which the Government clung to their place began to look as if they were afraid to meet the challenge of the Liberals. The more they held back the more loudly and vehemently was the challenge repeated. Many Liberals who declared that all they wanted was to meet the Government at the hustings at once were probably in their hearts somewhat afraid of the result of the encounter. But as Mr. Gladstone had again and again challenged the Government to appeal to the country, all his followers, and some who would not have followed him if they could have helped it, were compelled to assume the appearance

of an eagerness and courage equal to his, and to echo in notes as little faltering as they could make them his call of defiance to Lord Beaconsfield. Thus the winter passed on. Two or three elections which occurred meantime resulted in favour of the Conservatives. Constituencies became divided into unexpected sections or factions. In one remarkable case, that of the Southwark election, very little interest apparently was taken by the Liberals. The candidate they put forward was not a man to excite enthusiasm or even interest. The Conservative candidate, Mr. Clarke, was a man of ability, character, and influence, and the result was a remarkable victory for the Conservative side. About this time, then, there was a little renewal of confidence among the friends of Lord Beaconsfield, and a sudden sinking of the spirits among most of the Liberals. Parliament met in February, and the Government gave it to be understood that they intended to have what one of them called 'a fair working session.' Suddenly, however, they made up their minds that it would be convenient to accept Mr. Gladstone's challenge, and to dissolve in the Easter holidays. The dissolution took place on March 24, 1880, and the elections began.

The result cannot be better described than in the words of Lord Beaconsfield himself, in the celebrated speech which depicted a sudden breakdown of the Liberal party in an attack upon Lord Derby's Government. We have quoted the words before in the place to which they properly belong, but they will

bear repetition in their new application here. Only one word needs to be changed; we put in 'ministerial' where Lord Beaconsfield said 'opposition.' 'It was like a convulsion of nature rather than any ordinary transaction of human life. I can only liken it to one of those earthquakes which take place in Calabria or Peru. There was a rumbling murmur, a groan, a shriek, a sound of distant thunder. There was a rent, a fissure in the ground, and then a village disappeared; then a tall tower toppled down; and the whole of the ministerial benches became one great dissolving view of anarchy.' For with the very first day of the elections it was evident that the Conservative majority was already gone. Each succeeding day showed more and more the change that had taken place in public feeling. Defeat was turned into disaster. Disaster became utter rout and confusion. When the elections were over it was found that the Conservative party were nowhere. A majority of some hundred and twenty sent the Liberals back into power. No Liberal statesmen in our time ever before saw themselves sustained by such an army of followers. There was a moment or two of hesitation—of delay. The Queen sent for Lord Hartington, she then sent for Lord Granville; but everyone knew in advance who was to come into power at last. The strife lately carried on had been the old duel between two great men. Mr. Gladstone had stood up against Lord Beaconsfield for some years and fought him alone. He had dragged his party after him into many a danger. He had compelled them more than

once to fight where many of them would fain have held back, and where none of them saw any chance of victory. Now, at last, the battle had been given to his hands, and it was a matter of necessity that the triumph should bring back to power the man whose energy and eloquence had inspired the struggle. The Queen sent for Mr. Gladstone, and a new chapter of English history opened, with the opening of which this work has to close.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE LITERATURE OF THE REIGN; SECOND SURVEY.

The later period which we have now to survey is more rich in scientific literature than that former period which we assumed to close with the Crimean war. In practical science, as we have already shown, the advance made during the reign of Queen Victoria has been greater in many ways than the advance made from the beginning of civilization to that time. Sir Robert Peel travelled from Rome to London to assume office as Prime Minister, exactly as Constantine travelled from York to Rome to become emperor. Each traveller had all that sails and horses could do for him, and no more. A few years later Peel might have reached London from Rome in some forty-eight hours. Something of the same kind may be said for economical, political, and what is now called social science. The whole of that system of legislative reform which is founded on a recognition of the principles of humanity may be said to belong to our own times. Our penal systems have undergone a thorough reform. More than once it seemed as if the reform were going too far, and as if the tenderness to criminals were likely to prove an encouragement to crime. But, although there have been for this reason little

outbursts of reaction every now and then, the growth of the principle of humanity has been steady, and the principle has taken firm and fixed root in our systems of penal legislation. Flogging in the army and navy may be said to be now wholly abolished. The senseless and barbarous system of imprisonment for debt is abandoned. There is no more transportation of convicts. Care is taken of the lives and the health of women and children in all manner of employments. Schools are managed on systems of wise gentleness. Dotheboys Hall would be an impossible picture even for caricature in these later years. We are perhaps at the beginning of a movement of legislation which is about to try to the very utmost that right of State interference with individual action which at one time it was the object of most of our legislators to reduce to its very narrowest proportions. It may be that this straining of the right of the majority over the minority is destined to bring about in due course its reaction. But we do not think that 'the survival of the fittest,' the doctrine on which our forefathers acted more or less consciously in the education of children and the treatment of criminals, will ever again, within any time to which speculation can safely reach, be adopted as a principle of our legislation. Much of the healthier and more humane spirit prevailing in our social systems, in our criminal laws, in the management of our schools, in the care of the State for the working classes, for women, and for children, is undoubtedly due to the spread of that sound and practical scientific teaching which began

to make it known everywhere that the recognition of the laws of health will always be found in the end to be a recognition of the laws of morality.

But, though the philosophy of these later days has proved itself thus essentially practical, it is to be observed that the great scientific controversy of the time is distinctly and purely speculative. The Darwinian theory, as it is commonly, we will not say vulgarly, called, may be described as one of the most remarkable facts in the history of its time. Dr. Charles R. Darwin, grandson of the author of 'The Botanic Garden' and 'Zoonomia,' was born in 1809. He showed at an early age great capacity as a naturalist. He accompanied as naturalist the expedition of His Majesty's ship 'Beagle' for the survey of South America and the circumnavigation of the globe. This expedition occupied him nearly five years, and he returned to England in 1836. He published several studies in geology and in fossil species, and seemed to have made his mark as a naturalist of distinction, and nothing more. Charles Knight's 'English Cyclopædia,' published in 1855, twenty years after the return of Dr. Darwin from his great voyage, speaks in high terms of his contributions to the sciences he studied, and adds: 'Mr. Darwin is still in the prime of life, and may therefore be expected to contribute largely to the extension of the sciences he has so successfully cultivated.' If Mr. Darwin had died soon after that time the world would never have suspected that it had lost anything more than a highly promising naturalist. In 1859 appeared 'The Origin of

Species by means of Natural Selection; or, the Preservation of the Favoured Races in the Struggle of Life.' The book had hardly been published when it was found that a great crisis had been reached in the history of science and of thought. The publication of Darwin's 'Origin of Species,' regarded as a mere historical fact, is of at least as much importance to the world as Comte's publication of his theory of historical development. In these pages we are considering Darwin's theory and his work merely as historical facts. We are dealing with them as we might deal with the fall of a dynasty or the birth of a new State. The controversy which broke out when the 'Origin of Species' was published has been going on ever since without the slightest sign of diminishing ardour. It spread almost through all society. It was heard from the pulpit and from the platform; it raged in the scientific and unscientific magazines. It was trumpeted in the newspapers; it made one of the stock subjects of talk in the dining room and the smoking room; it tittered over the tea table. Mr. Darwin's central idea was that the various species of plants and animals, instead of being each specially created and immutable, are continually undergoing modification and change through a process of adaptation, by virtue of which such varieties of the species as are in any way better fitted for the rough work of the struggle for existence are enabled to survive and multiply at the expense of the others. Mr. Darwin considers this principle, with indeed some other and less important causes, capable of explaining the man-

ner in which all existing types may have descended from one or a very few low forms of life. All animals, beasts, birds, reptiles, insects have descended, he contends, from a very limited number of progenitors, and he holds that analogy points to the belief that all animals and plants whatever have descended from one common prototype. The idea that man gradually developed from some very low prototype was, of course, not Dr. Darwin's especially, nor belonging even to Dr. Darwin's time. It was an idea that had been floating about the world almost at all times. It had become somewhat fashionable in England not long before Dr. Darwin published his 'Origin of Species.' It was led up to in the 'Vestiges of Creation,' a book that once caused much stir in scientific and religious circles. A strong-minded lady in Lord Beaconsfield's 'Tancred' bewilders and saddens the young hero by gravely informing him that we once were fishes, and shall probably in the end be crows. But Darwin's book, if we take it as resting for its central point of doctrine upon that principle of the survival of the fittest, was the first great systematised attempt to give the theory a solid place among the scientific opinions of the world. It was worked out with the most minute and elaborate care, and with an inexhaustible patience—qualities which we do not expect to find in the originators of new and startling theories. Dr. Darwin's work was fiercely assailed and passionately championed. It was not the scientific principle which inflamed so much commotion; it was the supposed bearing of the doctrines on

revealed religion. Injustice was done to the calm examination of Darwin's theory on both sides of the controversy. Many who really had not yet given themselves time even to consider its arguments cried out in admiration of the book, merely because they assumed that it was destined to deal a blow to the faith in revealed religion. On the other side many of the believers in revealed religion were much too easily alarmed and too sensitive. Many of them did not pause to ask themselves whether, if every article of the doctrine were proved to be scientifically true, it would affect in the slightest degree the basis of their religious faith. To this writer it seems clear that Dr. Darwin's theory might be accepted by the most orthodox believer without the firmness of his faith moulting a feather. The theory is one altogether as to the process of growth and construction in the universe, and, whether accurate or inaccurate, does not seem in any wise to touch the question which is concerned with the sources of all life, movement, and being. However that may be, it is certain that the book made an era not only in science, but in scientific controversy, and not merely in scientific controversy, but in controversy expanding into all circles and amongst all intelligences. The scholar and the fribble, the divine and the school girl, still talk and argue and wrangle over Darwin and the origin of species.

Professor Huxley is one of the most distinguished and thoroughgoing supporters of Mr. Darwin's principle. Professor Huxley advocates, in his own

words, 'the hypothesis which supposes that species living at any time must be the result of a gradual modification of pre-existing species.' He maintains that to suppose each species of plant or animal to have been formed and placed on the globe at long intervals by a distinct act of creative power is an assumption 'as unsupported by tradition or revelation as it is opposed to the general analogy of nature.' Professor Huxley would have been a distinguished scientific man if he had never taken any part in the Darwin controversy. He would have been a distinguished scientific man even if he had not been, as he is, a great thinker and writer. In the arena of public controversy he has long been a familiar and formidable figure. He came into the field at first almost unknown, like the Disinherited Knight in Scott's romance; and while the good-natured spectators were urging him to turn the blunt end of the lance against the shield of the least formidable opponent, he dashed with splendid recklessness and with spearpoint forward against the buckler of Richard Owen himself, then the most renowned of England's living naturalists. Professor Huxley has a happy gift of shrewd sense and sarcasm combined. Few men can expose a sophism so effectively in a single sentence of exhaustive satire. It would be wrong to regard him merely as a scientific man. He is a literary man as well. What he writes would be worth reading for its form and its expression alone, were it of no scientific authority. He has a fascinating style, and a happy way of pressing into the

service of strictly scientific exposition some illustration caught from literature and art, even from popular and light literature. Mr. Huxley seemed from the first to understand that a scientific school can never become really powerful while it is content with the ear of strictly scientific men. He cultivated, therefore, sedulously and successfully the literary art of expression. His style as a lecturer has a special charm. It is free from any effort at rhetorical eloquence; but it has all the eloquence which is born of the union of deep thought with simple expression and luminous diction. There is not much of the poetic about Mr. Huxley's style; but the occasional vividness of his illustrations suggests the existence of some of the higher imaginative qualities. There was something like a gleam of the poetic in the half melancholy, half humorous introduction of Balzac's famous 'Peau de Chagrin' into the well-known protoplasm lecture. But as a rule Mr. Huxley treads only the firm earth and deliberately, perhaps scornfully, rejects any aspirings after the clouds.

Professor Tyndall, another great teacher in the same school, has, like Mr. Huxley, the gift of literary expression, informed perhaps by more of the imaginative and the poetic. Mr. Tyndall has done perhaps more practical work in science than Mr. Huxley. He has written more; he has sometimes written more eloquently. But there is a certain coarseness of materialism about Mr. Tyndall's views with regard to man and nature. There is a vehe-

ment aggressiveness in him which must interfere with the clearness of his views. He has occasionally assailed the orthodox with the polemical intemperance of a field-preacher. He has more than once been carried clear away from his purpose by the unsparing vigour of his controversial style. He is sometimes one of the most impatient of sages, the most intolerant of philosophers. His temper as a controversialist may have tended sometimes to weaken his scientific authority, but of course this only happens where the subject engrossing Professor Tyndall's attention is one of that class which have in all ages proved too exciting now and then for the cool judgment even of philosophers. Mr. Tyndall has made noble contributions to scientific literature which concern in no wise the tremendous questions put by Mr. Carlyle with such solemnity and such emotion—'Whence, and, oh Heavens! whither?'

Mr. Herbert Spencer may be said to have taken the sphere of the naturalist and the spheres of the metaphysician and the psychologist, and drawn a circle round embracing and enfolding them all and adopting them as his province. If Mr. Darwin's attempt to map out the process by which vegetable and animal life are gradually constructed was an ambitious effort, the task which Mr. Herbert Spencer undertook was of still more vast and venturous scope. Mr. Spencer is the author of a series of connected philosophical works intended to reduce to harmonious and scientific order the principles of biology, psychology, sociology, and morality. He has applied

universally and carried out in systematic detail the doctrine of evolution or development. In 1855 appeared his 'Principles of Psychology,' an attempt to analyse the relations between the order of the worlds of matter and of mind. The central and governing idea of this work is that the universal law of intelligence flows directly from the co-operation of mind and nature, in the creation of our ideas. As there is a persistency in the order of events in nature, so will there be a persistency in the connection between the corresponding states of consciousness. The succession or co-existence of external phenomena produces a like succession in our mental perceptions, and when any two psychical states often occur together, there is at length established an internal tendency for those states always to recur in the same order. Starting from the law which has been thus described in words that are not ours, Mr. Spencer traces the growth of human intelligence from the lower phenomena of reflex action and instinct, and then shows how our unconscious life merges in a succession of conscious phenomena; and lastly he endeavours to carry us upwards from the origin of memory to the highest exercise of reason and the scientific development of the moral feelings. In other words Mr. Spencer endeavours to lay down the principles of development for the whole world of matter, of mind, and of morals. Mr. Spencer has written essays on education, on the government of States, and on other subjects, which however scarcely seem to be marked by the precision of thought which distinguishes him as a

psychological writer. His views of education and of civic government seem occasionally to degenerate almost to the degree of crotchets. His style is not fascinating. It is clear, strong, and simple, but it has little literary beauty, and borrows little from illustration of any kind. Mr. Spencer himself utterly undervalues what he regards as superfluous words. Attractiveness of style is part of the instrumentality by which a great writer or speaker accomplishes his ends. If a man would convince he must not disdain the arts by which people can be induced to listen. Much of Mr. Spencer's greatest work had long been little better than a calling aloud to solitude for the lack of the attractiveness of style which he despises, but which Plato or Aristotle would not have despised. Mr. Spencer, however, rather prides himself on not caring much about the Greeks and their literature. A great thinker he undoubtedly is ; one of the greatest thinkers of modern time ; perhaps a man to be classed among the few great and original philosophers of all time. It is only of late years that his fame has begun to spread among his own countrymen. Gradually it has become known to the English public in general that there was among them a great lonely thinker, surveying the problems of mind and matter as from some high serene watch-tower. His works were well known among reading people in the United States long before they had ceased to be the exclusive property of a very select few in England. Of late he has come to be in a certain sense the fashion in this country among people who desire to be thought

clever. It is not any part of our purpose to raise the question whether less honour is done to a great writer by neglecting him altogether, or by adopting him as one of the authors whom it is conventionally proper to have read, and with whom therefore everybody is bound to affect an acquaintance. It certainly was not for that that Mr. Spencer toiled his way over the rugged unpitying Alpine heights of thought '*ut pueris* —we may add, *puellisque—placeat et declamatio fiat.*'

The name of Professor Max Müller is now by common consent enrolled with the names of famous Englishmen. Max Müller has adopted England as his home, and England has quietly annexed his reputation. He has approached the history of man's development by the study of man's speech. He has opened a new and a most important road for the student. In his hands philology ceases to be a dry science of words, and becomes quickened into a living teacher of history. Max Müller has contributed to various departments of thought, and has proved himself a charming writer, who can invest even the least attractive subject with an absorbing interest.

Metaphysical and psychological science have lately lost a pupil of marvellous versatility in George Henry Lewes. No literary man in our time did so many different things and did them so well as Mr. Lewes. He wrote novels; he made some of the most successful adaptations from the French theatre known to our stage; he was an accomplished literary and dramatic critic; he translated Spinoza; he wrote the lives of Goethe and of Robespierre; he produced

a history of philosophy in which he had something of his own to say about every great philosopher from Thales down to Schelling and Comte; he was the author of all manner of physiological essays; his 'Problems of Life and Mind' and his 'Physical Basis of Mind' were really contributions of permanent value to the studies with which they so boldly dealt. It is not perhaps unworthy of notice that Mr. Lewes was even a remarkably good amateur actor. It seemed as if he must be able to do everything well to which it pleased him to put his hand. His peculiar merit was not, however, that he could write clever books on a great variety of subjects. London has many hack writers who could go to work at any publisher's order, and produce successively an epic poem, a novel, a treatise on the philosophy of the conditioned, a handbook of astronomy, a farce, a life of Julius Cæsar, an account of African explorations, and a volume of sermons. But none of these productions would have one gleam of native and genuine vitality about it. The moment it had served its purpose in the literary market it would go dead down to the dead. Lewes's works are of quite a different style. They have positive merit and value of their own, and they live. It was a characteristically audacious thing to attempt to cram the history of philosophy into a couple of medium-sized volumes, polishing off each philosopher in a few pages, draining him, plucking out the heart of his mystery and his system, and stowing him away in the glass jar designed to exhibit him to an edified class of students.

But it must be admitted that the 'History of Philosophy' is a genuine and a valuable study, although the author, not then in the calmer maturity of his powers, crumples up the whole science of metaphysics, sweeps away transcendental philosophy, and demolishes *à priori* reasoning in a manner which strongly reminds one of Arthur Pendennis upsetting, in a dashing criticism and on the faith of an hour's reading in an encyclopædia, some great scientific theory of which he had never heard before, and the development of which had been the life's labour of a sage.

The period which we are surveying was especially rich in historical studies. It was prolific, not only in historians and histories, but even in new ways of studying history. The Crimean war was still going on when Mr. Froude's 'History of England from the fall of Wolsey to the death of Elizabeth' began to make its appearance; and the public soon became alive to the fact that a man of great and original power had come into literature. The first volume of Mr. Buckle's 'History of Civilisation' was published in 1857. Mr. Freeman literally disentombed a great part of the early history of England; cleared it of the accumulated dust of traditional error and ignorance, and for the first time showed it to us as it must have presented itself to the eyes of those who helped to make it. Mr. Kinglake began the story of the Crimean war. Mr. Lecky occupied himself with 'The History of Rationalism in Europe,' 'The History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne,' and more

lately with the great days of the eighteenth century. Canon Stubbs made the 'Constitutional History of England' his province; and Mr. Green undertook to compress the whole sequence of English history into a sort of literary outline map in which events stood clearly out in the just perspective and proportions of their real importance. Of the men we have named, it would not be unreasonable to say that Mr. Froude and Mr. Kinglake belong to the romantic school of historian; Mr. Buckle and Mr. Lecky to the philosophic; Mr. Freeman, Canon Stubbs, and Mr. Green to the practical and the real. To show events and people as they were, is the clear aim of this latter school; to picture them dramatically and vividly would seem to be the ambition of Mr. Froude and Mr. Kinglake. To show that they have a system and a sequence, and are evidence of great natural laws, is the object of men like Mr. Buckle and Mr. Lecky. Mr. Froude is probably the most popular historian since Macaulay, although his popularity is far indeed from that of Macaulay. He is widely read where Mr. Freeman would seem intolerably learned and pedantic, and Mr. Lecky too philosophic to be lively. His books have been the subject of the keenest controversy. His picture of Henry VIII. set all the world wondering. It set an example and became a precedent. It founded a new school in history and biography; what we may call the paradoxical school; the school which sets itself to discover that some great man had all the qualities for which the world had never before given him credit,

and none of those which it had always been content to recognise as his undoubted possession. The virtues of the misprized Tiberius; the purity and meekness of Lucrezia Borgia; the disinterestedness and forbearance of Charles of Burgundy, these and other such historical discoveries naturally followed Mr. Froude's illustration of the domestic virtues, the exalted chastity, and the merciful disposition of Henry VIII. Mr. Froude has, however, qualities which raise him high above the level of the ordinary paradoxical historian. He has a genuine creative power. We may refuse to believe that his Henry VIII. is the Henry of history, but we cannot deny that Mr. Froude makes us see his Henry as vividly as if he stood in life before us. A dangerous gift for a historian; but it helps to make a great literary man. Mr. Froude may claim to be regarded as a great literary man, measured by the standard of our time. He has imagination; he has that sympathetic and dramatic instinct which enables a man to enter into the emotions and motives, the likings and dislikings, of people of a past age. His style is penetrating and thrilling; his language often rises to the dignity of a poetic eloquence. The figures he conjures up are always the semblances of real men and women. They are never wax-work, or lay figures, or skeletons clothed in words, or purple rags of description stuffed out with straw into an awkward likeness of the human form. The one distinct impression we carry away from Mr. Froude's history is that of the living reality of his figures. In Marlowe's 'Faustus,' the

Doctor conjures up for the amusement of the Emperor a procession of beautiful and stately shadows to represent the great ones of the past. When the apparitions of Alexander the Great and his favourite pass by, the Emperor can hardly restrain himself from rushing to clasp the hero in his arms, and has to be reminded by the wizard that 'these are but shadows, not substantial.' Even then the Emperor can hardly get over his impression of their reality; for he cries:—

> I have heard it said
> That this fair lady whilst she lived on earth,
> Had on her neck a little wart or mole;

and, lo! there is the mark on the neck of the beautiful form which floats across his field of vision. Mr. Froude's shadows are like this; so deceptive, so seemingly vital and real; with the beauty and the blot alike conspicuous; with the pride and passion of the hero and the heroine's white neck and the wart on it. Mr. Froude's whole soul, in fact, is in the human beings whom he meets as he unfolds his narrative. He is a romantic or heroic portrait-painter. He has painted some pictures which may almost compare with those of Titian. Their glances follow and haunt one like the wonderful eyes of Cæsar Borgia, or the soul-piercing resignation of that face on Guido's canvas once believed to be that of Beatrice Cenci. But Mr. Froude wants the one indispensable quality of the true historian, accuracy. He wants altogether the cold, patient, stern quality which clings to facts; the scientific faculty. His narrative never stands out in that 'dry light' which Bacon so commends; the

light of undistorted and clear truth. The temptations to a man with the gift of heroic portrait-painting are too great for Mr. Froude. His genius carries him away and becomes his master. When Titian was painting his Cæsar Borgia, is it not conceivable that his imagination may have been positively inflamed by the contrast between the man's physical beauty and moral guilt, and have unconsciously heightened the contrast by making the pride and passion lour more darkly, the superb brilliancy of the eyes burn more radiantly, than might have been seen in real life? Mr. Froude has evidently been often thus ensnared by his own special gift. There is hardly anything in our modern literature more powerful, picturesque, and dramatic than his portrait of Mary Queen of Scots. It stands out and glows and darkens with all the glare and gloom of a living form, now in sun and now in shadow. It is almost as perfect and impressive as Titian. But no reasonable person can doubt that it is a dramatic and not an historical study. Without going into any controversy as to disputed facts, even admitting for the sake of argument that Mary was as guilty as Mr. Froude would make her, it is impossible to believe that the woman he has painted is the Mary Stuart of history and of life. No doubt his Mary is now a reality for us. We are distinctly acquainted with her; we can see her and follow her movements. But she is a fable for all that. The poets and painters have made the form of the mermaid not one whit less clear and distinct for us than the figure of a living

woman. If any of us were to see a painting of a mermaid with scales upon her neck, or with feet, he would resent it or laugh at it as an inaccuracy, just as if he saw some gross anatomical blunder in a picture of a man or woman. Mr. Froude has created a Mary Stuart as art and legend have created a mermaid. He has made her one of the most imposing figures in our modern literature, to which indeed she is an important addition. His Queen Elizabeth is almost equally remarkable as a work of art. His Henry VIII. stands not quite so high, and far lower comes his Cæsar, which is absurdly untrue as a portrait, and is not strong even as a romantic picture. Mr. Froude's personal integrity and candour are constantly coming into contradiction with his artistic temptation; but the portrait goes on all the same. He is too honest and candid to conceal or pervert any fact that he knows. He tells everything frankly, but continues his picture in his own way. It may be that some rather darksome vices suddenly prove their existence in the character of the person whom Mr. Froude had chosen to illustrate the brightness and glory of human nature. Mr. Froude is not abashed. He deliberately states the facts; shows how, in this or that instance, truth did tell shocking lies, mercy ordered several massacres, and virtue fell into the ways of Messalina. But he still maintains that his pictures are portraits of truth, mercy, and virtue. A lover of art, according to a story in the memoirs of Canova, was so struck with admiration of that sculptor's Venus that he begged to be allowed to see

the model. The artist gratified him ; but, so far from beholding a very goddess of beauty in the flesh, he only saw a well-made, rather coarse-looking woman. The sculptor, seeing his disappointment, explained to him that the hand and the eye of the artist, as they work, can gradually and almost imperceptibly change the model from that which it is in the flesh to that which it ought to be in the marble. This is the process which is always going on with Mr. Froude whenever he is at work upon some model in which for love or hate he takes unusual interest. Therefore the historian is constantly involving himself in a welter of inconsistencies and errors. Mr. Froude's errors go far to justify the dull and literal old historians of the school of Dryasdust, who, if they never quickened an event into life, never, on the other hand, deluded the mind with phantoms. The chroniclers of mere facts and dates, the old almanac-makers, are weary creatures ; but one finds it hard to condemn them to mere contempt when he sees how the vivid genius of a man like Mr. Froude can lead him astray. Mr. Froude's finest artistic gift becomes his greatest defect for the special work he undertakes to do. A scholar, a man of high imagination, a man likewise of patient labour, he is above all things a romantic portrait-painter ; and the spell by which his works allure us is the spell of the magician, not the calm power of the teacher.

Mr. Buckle's 'History of Civilisation in England' created a sensation hardly less than that produced by Mr. Darwin's 'Origin of Species.' Indeed for a

time the interest it created was keener and more widely diffused. Mr. Buckle undertook to prove four great principles, which he contended were essential to the understanding of history. First, that the progress of nations depends upon the success with which the laws of phenomena are investigated, and the extent to which a knowledge of these laws is diffused. Second, that before any such investigation can proceed a spirit of scepticism must arise 'which, at first aiding the investigation, is afterwards aided by it.' Third, that the results of this investigation tend to increase the influence of intellectual truths, and to diminish not absolutely, but relatively, the influence of moral truths, which latter are more stationary than intellectual truths, and receive fewer additions. Fourth, that the great enemy of this progressive investigation, and consequently of human civilisation, is the protective spirit in which Governments undertake to watch over men and direct them what to do, and in which churches and teachers prescribe for them what they are to believe. Now it is plain that on the decision of the first point rested the whole issue between Mr. Buckle and his opponents. If the progress of civilisation depended upon the discovery and right appreciation of phenomena, then the basis of the science of history would be settled beyond dispute. History would then take its ordered place like any of the physical sciences. But it was on this very first point that the struggle had to be made in which, as it seems to us, Mr. Buckle's endeavour broke down. He laboured to

establish nothing less than the fact that all the movements of history, and indeed of human life through all its processes, are regulated by fixed physical laws as certain as those which rule the motions of the waves and the changes of the weather, and of which we could arrive at a sound and trustworthy knowledge if we were content to study their phenomena as we do the phenomena of the sea and the skies. Of course this was not an idea which occurred for the first time to Mr. Buckle. It is an idea which has always been more or less clearly in the minds of some men. It belongs to that principle which Comte laid down, when he endeavoured to explain the development of human history. It was more than once put into the form of a principle by Goethe, and had been described more distinctly still by Lessing. But men like Goethe and Lessing suggested it rather as a probability than endeavoured to define it as an actual law. Mr. Buckle set about establishing it as the law of human life by illustration, argument, and evidence drawn from the actual facts of history and of nature. He brought to his task a vast amount of more or less arranged information, an ardent spirit full of faith in his own theory, and a power of self-will and self-complacency which enabled him to accept as certain and settled every dogma on which he had personally made up his mind. The 'History of Civilisation' was never finished. The author's early death brought the task to a close. It remains a great effort, a monument of courage, energy, and labour; perhaps indeed it might not inaptly be described as a ruin,

Mr. Buckle had attempted a task beyond the compass of one man's capacity and of men's combined knowledge thus far. He tried to build a literary Tower of Babel, by means of which man might reach the skies and look down complacently on the mechanical movements of planets, races, and generations beneath. He died at the age of forty, lamenting almost with his latest breath that he had to leave his work unfinished, and still believing that life, mere life, was all he needed to make it complete.

Mr. Kinglake's still unfinished history of the Crimean war is full of brilliant description and of keen, penetrating thought. It shows many gleams of the poetic, and it has some of the brightest and bitterest satirical passages in the literature of our time. The chapters in which Mr. Kinglake goes out of his way to describe the career, the character, and the companions of the Emperor Napoleon III. cut like corrosive acid. Mr. Kinglake found his mind filled with detestation of Louis Napoleon and his companions. He invented for himself the theory that the Crimean war arose only out of Louis Napoleon's peculiar position, and his anxiety to become recognised among the great sovereigns of Europe. The invention of this theory gave him an excuse for lavishing so much labour of love and hate on chapters which must always remain a masterpiece of remorseless satire. They hardly pretend to be always just in their estimate of men, but no one rates them according to their justice or their injustice. They are read for their style, and nothing more. Perhaps it would not

be altogether unjust to say much the same of the history as far as it has gone. It is brilliant; it is powerful; it is full of thrilling passages; but it remains after all the historical romance rather than history. Moreover, it is a good deal too long. The Crimean war came after a generation of peace, and to many Englishmen it almost seemed as if there never had been such a war before or would be again. Mr. Kinglake set about his great book with something like the same estimate of the historical importance and proportions of the war. Even already the perspective of events is beginning to come fairly out, and it seems as if the Crimean campaign hardly needed the huge historical monument at which Mr. Kinglake is still at work.

Mr. Lecky has probably more of the philosophic mind than any of his contemporaries. He has treated history on a large scale and in the philosophical spirit. He has taken a wide and liberal survey of the progress of thought and of morals as a whole, and then has brought the knowledge and observation thus acquired to the practical purpose of illustrating certain passages of history and periods of human development. His 'History of England in the Eighteenth Century,' is not more remarkable thus far for the closeness and fulness of its details than for its breadth of view and its calmness of judgment. Mr. Lecky is always the historian and never the partisan. His works grow on the reader. They do not turn upon him all at once a sudden glare like the flash of a revolving light, but they fill the mind gradually with a sense of their

justice, their philosophic thought, and the clear calmness of their historical observation.

Dean Stanley, the pupil and the biographer of Dr. Arnold, has made some of the most valuable contributions to ecclesiastical history which our time possesses. His 'Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey' fascinates the reader by its beauty of style and by the evidences of the loving care with which the author has approached his subject. Mr. John Morley has produced monographs of Burke, of Rousseau, and of Voltaire which are original in their very form, and which have made a distinct mark on the literature of their day. There are many essayists in history, biography, and the criticism of art and letters who well deserve to be named in a survey of the literature of our time, but whom we are compelled to pass over. Space would hardly allow of our even classing them in schools, as, for example, the Positivists, the Neo-Pagans, the Æsthetics, the Agnostics, the Satirists, and all the rest. In an age of prodigious literary activity the essayists of various schools have certainly not been the least active and productive.

The poets, however, outnumber them by far. We have had no great poet in these later days, but the number of our singers is prodigious. A great meeting of poets could be got up in London alone. Many really fine poems are the almost unnoticed result of this multitudinous labour. Sir Walter Scott once said with good-humoured modesty that he had taught many ladies and gentlemen to write romances as well or nearly as well as he could himself. Of the

poetic voices which literally fill the air around us, the majority must be those of mere mocking-birds, and yet it is not always easy to distinguish between the original notes and the imitation. The highest reach attained among the poets of this later day is assuredly that of Mr. Swinburne. His first volume of poems, containing 'The Queen Mother' and 'Rosamond,' published in 1861, made no mark whatever, but his 'Atalanta in Calydon,' which appeared in 1865, startled the world. The mere boldness of the return to the subjects and the very forms of Greek drama would have commanded attention; but there was something much more commanding in the genuine originality with which the poet breathed new life into the antique forms. Mr. Swinburne's mastery of melodious phrase and verse astonished even the age acquainted with the musical richness and softness of Tennyson's lines, and Mr. Swinburne had a vibrating strength in his verse such as the Poet Laureate never tried to have. Mr. Swinburne decidedly shot an arrow higher into the air than any of his fellows in these later days, but he only shot one arrow. To vary the illustration, we may say that the jet from his poetic source soared higher than that of any of his rivals; but it was only one thin, narrow stream, and not a full fountain sending its spray and its waters broadly in the sun. His poetic ideas are very few. Even his vocabulary is not liberal. Words as well as ideas are soon exhausted. Even the greatest admirer becomes conscious of a sense of monotony as he listens again and again to the same cry of

rebellion against established usage, the same hysterical appeal to lawlessness in passion and in art, poured forth in the same phraseology and with the same alliteration. Mr. Morris, the author of 'Jason' and 'The Earthly Paradise,' is a poet of a milder and a purer strain. Nothing can be more beautiful, tender, and melancholy than some of his sweet, pathetic stories. Mr. Morris has been compared to Chaucer, but he is at the best a Chaucer without strength and without humour. He has such story-teller's power as one might suppose suited to absorb the evening hours of some lady of mediæval days. She would have loved Mr. Morris's beautiful tales of love and truth and constancy and separation, tales which, to quote the poet's own words, 'would make her sweet eyes wet, at least sometimes, at least when heaven and earth on some fair eve had grown too fair for mirth.' But the broad strength of Chaucer, the animal spirits, the ringing laughter, the occasional fierceness of emotion, the pain, and the passion are not to be found in Mr. Morris's exquisite and gentle verse. Mr. Dante G. Rossetti has written some sonnets which are probably entitled to rank with the best of their kind at any time, and one or two ballads of fierce, impassioned style, which seem as if they came straight from the heart of the old northern ballad world. Miss Christina Rossetti's 'Goblin Market' is almost perfect in its way. Miss Jean Ingelow has written some tender and pathetic poems. Mr. Aubrey de Vere is a true poet, and one of a family of poets. Mr. Robert Buchanan at one time gave promise of

taking a high rank among modern poets. Assuredly he has not fulfilled all the hopes of his first days, but he must always stand well among the singers who only claim to form the second order of the poets of our time. 'The Spanish Gipsy' and other productions in verse, by the novelist George Eliot, are the clever attempts of a woman of genius who is not a poet to write poetry. The poetry of these days may boast of having produced a distinct school, which has contrived to inoculate not only literature but art, architecture, ornament, dress, and social life generally with its influence. It is possible that long after the world may have ceased to read even the best writers of the school, the school itself will live curiously in memory, with its mannerisms, its affectations, its absurdities, imitations, and quackeries, and at the same time with its genuine beauty and high spiritual aspirations. The *précieuses*, it is to be remembered, were not always ridiculous. They were not ridiculous at all to begin with. They were ladies of intellect and true artistic feeling. It was only when imitation and insincerity set in, when sentiment took the place of emotion, when mannerism tried to pass itself off as originality, that the heroines of Molière's immortal comedy could have been lifelike figures even in caricature. So it is with the pre-Raphaelite school, as a certain group of poets and painters came to be fantastically designated. Pre-Raphaelitism was in the beginning a vigorous protest in favour of truth in nature and art, of open eyes and faithful observation in artistic critics, students, and everyone else, as

against conventionalities and prettinesses and unrealities of all kinds. Mr. Ruskin was the prophet of the new school. Mr. Dante Rossetti, Mr. Holman Hunt, Mr. Madox Brown, and Mr. Millais were its practical expounders in art. A great controversy sprang up, and England divided itself into two schools. No impartial person can deny that Mr. Ruskin and the pre-Raphaelites did great good, and that much of their influence and example was decidedly healthy. But pre-Raphaelitism became a very different thing in later years, when it professed to invade all arts, and to establish itself in all the decorative business of life from the ornamentation of a cathedral to the fringe of a dress. Lately it has become a mere affectation, an artistic whim. It has got mixed up with æstheticism, neo-paganism, and other such fantasies. The typical pre-Raphaelite of the school's later development is, however, a figure not unworthy of description. The typical pre-Raphaelite believed Mr. Dante Rossetti and Mr. Burne Jones to be the greatest artists of the ancient or modern world. If any spoke to him of contemporary English poetry, he assumed that there was only question of Mr. Rossetti, Mr. Swinburne, or Mr. Morris. In modern French literature he admired Victor Hugo, Baudelaire, and one or two others newer to song, and of whom the outer world had yet heard little. Among the writers of older France he was chiefly concerned about François Villon. He was an enthusiastic admirer of the paintings of the late Henri Regnault. Probably he spoke of France as 'our

France.' He was angry with the Germans for having vexed our France. He professed faith in the philosophy of Schopenhauer and the music of Wagner, and he was greatly touched by Chopin. He gave himself out as familiar with the Greek poets, and was wild in his admiration of Sappho. He made for himself a sort of religion out of wall-paper, old teapots, and fans. He thought to order, and yet above all things piqued himself on his originality. He and his comrades received their opinions as Charlemagne's converts did their Christianity, in platoons. He became quite a distinct figure in the literary history of our time, and he positively called into existence a whole school of satirists in fiction, verse, and drawing to make fun of his follies, whimsicalities, and affectations.

The fiction of this second period has one really great name, and one only. The author of 'Adam Bede' and 'The Mill on the Floss' stands on a literary level with Dickens and Thackeray and Charlotte Brontë. 'George Eliot,' as this author chooses to call herself, is undoubtedly a great writer, merely as a writer. Her literary career began as a translator and an essayist. Her tastes seemed then to lead her wholly into the somewhat barren fields where German metaphysics endeavour to come to the relief or the confusion of German theology. She became a contributor to the *Westminster Review*; then she became its assistant editor, and worked assiduously for it under the direction of Dr. John Chapman, the editor. She had mastered many sciences as well as literatures. Probably no other novel-writer, since

novel-writing became a business, ever possessed anything like her scientific knowledge. Unfortunately, her scientific knowledge 'o'er informed' her later novels, and made them oppressive to readers who longed for the early freshness of 'Adam Bede.' George Eliot does not seem to have found out, until she had passed what is conventionally regarded as the age of romance, that she had in her, high above all other gifts, the faculty of the novelist. When an author who is not very young makes a great hit at last, we soon begin to learn that he had already made many attempts in the same direction, and his publishers find an eager demand for the stories and sketches which, when they first appeared, utterly failed to attract attention. But it does not seem that Miss Marian Evans, as she then was, ever published anything in the way of fiction previous to the series of sketches which appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' and were called 'Scenes of Clerical Life.' These sketches attracted considerable attention, and were much admired; but not many people probably saw in them the capacity which produced 'Adam Bede' and 'Romola.' With the publication of 'Adam Bede' came a complete triumph. The author was elevated at once and by acclamation to the highest rank among living novelists. In one of the first numbers of the 'Cornhill Magazine' Thackeray, in a gossiping paragraph about novelists of the day, whom he mentioned alphabetically and by their initials, spoke of 'E' as a 'star of the first magnitude just risen on the horizon.' Nothing is much rarer than the union of the scientific and the literary

or artistic temperaments. So rare is it that the exceptional, the almost solitary instance of Goethe comes up at once, distinct and striking to the mind. English novelists are even less likely to have anything of a scientific taste than French or German. Dickens knew nothing of science, and had, indeed, as little knowledge of any kind, save that which is derived from observation, as any respectable Englishman could well have. Thackeray was a man of varied reading, versed in the lighter literature of several languages, and strongly imbued with artistic tastes; but he had no care for science, and knew of it only what everyone has to learn at school. Lord Lytton's science was a mere sham. Charlotte Brontë was genius and ignorance. George Eliot is genius and culture. Had she never written a page of fiction, she must have been regarded with admiration by all who knew her as a woman of deep thought and of a varied knowledge such as men complacently believe to be the possession only of men. It was not this, however, which made her a great novelist. Her eyes were not turned inwards or kept down in metaphysical contemplation. She studied the living world around her. She had an eye for external things keen almost as that of Dickens or Balzac. George Eliot is the only novelist who can paint such English people as the Poysers and the Tullivers just as they are. She looks into the very souls of such people. She tracks out their slow peculiar mental processes; she reproduces them fresh and firm from very life. Mere realism, mere photographing, even from the life, is not in art a great triumph.

But George Eliot can make her dullest people interesting and dramatically effective. She can paint two dull people with quite different ways of dulness—a dull man and a dull woman, for example—and the reader is astonished to find how utterly distinct the two kinds of stupidity are, and how intensely amusing both can be made. There are two pedantic, pompous, dull advocates in Mr. Browning's 'The Ring and the Book.' How distinct they are; how different, how unlike, and how true are the two portraits! But then it must be owned that the poet sometimes allows his pedants to be as tiresome as they would be in real life, if each successively held a weary listener by the button. George Eliot is not guilty of any such artistic fault. No one wants to be rid of Mrs. Poyser, or Aunt Glegg, or the prattling Florentines in 'Romola.' There never was or could be a Mark Tapley or a Sam Weller. We put up with these impossibilities and delight in them, because they are so amusing and so full of fantastic humour. But Mrs. Poyser lives, and everyone knows an Aunt Glegg, and poor Mrs. Tulliver's cares and hopes and little fears and pitiful reasonings are animating hundreds of Mrs. Tullivers all over England. George Eliot has infused into the novel some elements it never had before; and so thoroughly infused them, that they blend with all the other materials, and do not form anywhere a solid lump or mass distinguishable from the rest. There are philosophical novels—'Wilhelm Meister,' for example—which are weighed down and loaded with philosophy, and which the world

only admires in spite of the philosophy. There are political novels—Lord Beaconsfield's for instance—which are only intelligible to those who make politics and political personalities a study, and which viewed merely as stories would not be worth speaking about. There are novels with a great direct purpose in them, such as 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' or 'Bleak House,' or Mr. Charles Reade's 'Hard Cash.' But these, after all, are only magnificent pamphlets, splendidly illustrated diatribes. The deep philosophic thought of George Eliot's best novels quietly suffuses and illumines them everywhere. There is no sermon here, no lecture there, no solid mass interposing between this incident and that, no ponderous moral hung around the neck of this or that personage. The reader feels that he is under the spell of one who is not merely a great story-teller, but who is also a deep thinker.

Mr. Anthony Trollope carries to its utmost limit the realism begun by Thackeray. He has none of Thackeray's genius; none of his fancy or feeling; none of his genuine creative power. He can describe with minute photographic faithfulness the ways, the talk, and sometimes even the emotions of a Belgravian family, of a nobleman's country-house, or the 'womankind' of a dean in a cathedral town. He does not trouble himself with passion or deep pathos, although he has got as far as to describe very touchingly the mental pains of a pretty girl thrown over by her lover, and has suggested with some genuine power the blended emotion, half agony of sorrow, half sense of relief, experienced by an elderly clergy-

man on the death of a shrewish wife. It was natural that after the public had had a long succession of Mr. Trollope's novels there should come a ready welcome for the school of fiction which was called the sensational. Of this school Mr. Wilkie Collins headed one class and Miss Braddon the other. Miss Braddon dealt in what we may call simple straightforward murders and bigamies, and such-like material; Mr. Wilkie Collins made his crimes always of an enigmatic nature, and compelled the reader to puzzle them out as if they were morbid conundrums. Mr. Trollope, however, continued to have his *clientèle* all the time that the sensational school in its various classes or branches was flourishing and fading. Mr. Trollope's readers may have turned away for a moment to hear what became of the lady who dropped her husband down the well or to guess at the secret of the mysterious Woman in White. But they soon turned loyally back to follow the gentle fortunes of Lily Dale, and to hear what was going on in the household of Framley Parsonage and under the stately roof of the Duke of Omnium.

Mr. Charles Reade, with all his imperfections as an artist, belongs to a higher order than Mr. Trollope, who is so much more thoroughly a master of his own narrower art. 'Peg Woffington' and 'Christie Johnstone,' the former published so long ago as 1852, seem almost perfect in their symmetry and beauty. 'The Cloister and the Hearth' might well-nigh have persuaded a reader that a new Walter Scott was about to arise on the horizon of our literature. In

Mr. Reade's more recent works, however, the author began to devote himself to the illustration of some social or legal grievance calling for reform, and people came to understand that a new branch of the art of novel-writing was in process of development, the special gift of which was to convert a Parliamentary blue-book into a work of fiction. The treatment of criminals in prison and in far-off penal settlements; the manner in which patients are dealt with in private lunatic asylums, became the main subject and backbone of the new style of novel, instead of the misunderstandings of lovers, the trials of honest poverty, or the struggles for ascendency in the fashionable circles of Belgravia. Mr. Reade may claim the merit of standing alone in work of this kind. He can make a blue-book live, and yet be a blue-book still. He takes the hard and naked facts as he finds them in some newspaper or in the report of some Parliamentary commission, and he so fuses them into the other material whereof his romance is to be made up that it would require a chemical analysis to separate the fiction from the reality. The reader is not conscious that he is going through the boiled-down contents of a blue-book. He has no aggrieved sense of being entrapped into the dry details of some harassing social question. The reality reads like romance; the romance lives like reality. No author ever indulged in a fairer piece of self-glorification than that contained in the last sentence of 'Put Yourself in his Place.' 'I have taken,' says Mr. Reade, 'a few undeniable truths out of many, and

have laboured to make my readers realise those appalling facts of the day which most men know, but not one in a thousand comprehends, and not one in a hundred thousand realises, until fiction—which, whatever you may have been told to the contrary, is the highest, widest, noblest, and greatest of all the arts—comes to his aid, studies, penetrates, digests the hard facts of chronicles and blue-books, and makes the dry bones live.'

Distinct, peculiar, and lonely is the place in fiction held by Mr. George Meredith, the author of 'The Ordeal of Richard Feverel,' 'Beauchamp's Career,' 'The Egoist,' and other novels. Mr. Meredith has been more than once described as a prose Browning. He has indeed much of Mr. Browning's obscurity of style, not caused by any obscurity of thought, but rather by a certain perverse indifference on the part of the artist to the business of making his meaning as clear to others as it is to himself. He has a good deal of Mr. Browning's peculiar kind of grim saturnine humour, not the humour that bubbles and sparkles,—the humour that makes men laugh even while it sometimes draws tears to the eyes. He lacks the novelist's first charm, the power of telling a story well. But, despite these defects, he is unquestionably one of the most remarkable of all the modern novelists, short of the very greatest. There are times when the reader is inclined to wonder how with so many great gifts he has failed to become a great novelist. The story called 'Beauchamp's Career,' which probably not one in every thousand novel-

readers has even opened, seems to us to have only narrowly missed being one of the great romances of the age of Queen Victoria. It is full of beauty, of power, and of pathos. Some of its characters are so drawn that they not merely stand out as if in life before us, but they enable us to enter into all their thoughts and anticipate all their purposes. We can conjecture beforehand what they will do in a given condition of things, just as we can tell how some friend of our own is likely to act when we hear what the circumstances are under which he is called upon to take a decision. This story too is not overladen, as others of Mr. Meredith's unluckily are, by epigram and antithesis, by curiosities of phrase which it is difficult to follow, and conceits which rather dazzle the eyes of the reader than light up the page. If Mr. Meredith's novels were to be examined according to their intellectual worth, they would deserve and demand a much fuller analysis than has been attempted here. But in these pages we are looking at the literature of the time from the chronicler's rather than the critic's point of view. We tell that a certain soldier won a battle or statesman gained a political victory, although we may ourselves be of opinion that the victory was better deserved on the other side. In the same spirit we record the fact that Mr. Meredith has not yet succeeded in gaining that place in fiction which our own judgment of his capacity would say that he is surely well qualified to attain.

Mr. Blackmore's 'Lorna Doone' seems to us on

the whole the best novel of the second class produced in England in our time. That is to say, we rank it distinctly below the great novels of Dickens and Thackeray and Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot, but above any novel produced by any writer short of these, and above the inferior works of these great artists themselves. Mr. William Black is the head of a school of fiction which he himself called into existence. Scottish scenery and Scottish character, alternating with certain phases of London life, are the field in which he works, and in which he has no rival. He has not as yet shown himself great in passion or in pathos. The deeper emotions of the human heart, the sterner phases of human life, he has apparently not often cared to touch. But in his own province, somewhat narrow though that be, his art approaches to perfection. He can paint not merely scenery, but even atmosphere, with a delicacy and strength of touch which in themselves constitute an art. Mr. Hardy has done something the same for certain English counties that Mr. Black has done for Scotland. He is occasionally stronger than Mr. Black, but he has not his subtle sweetness, charm, and tender grace, and he is far less equal, far less surely master of his own craft. A word must be said of the delicate porcelain of Miss Thackeray's work in fiction—her tender, gentle, womanly stories, nor should we fail to record the fact that Mrs. Craik's 'John Halifax, Gentleman,' was one of the literary successes of the day.

A style of novel peculiar to this age, and very

unlike that of Miss Thackeray or Mrs. Craik, deserves a word of mention. That is the novel which records the lives, the rompings, the ambitions, the flirtations, and the sufferings of what we may call the Roaring Girl of the Victorian age. With tousled unkempt hair, disorderly dress, occasionally dirty hands, and lips bubbling over with perpetual slang, this strange young woman has bounced into fiction. She has always a true and tender heart under her somewhat uncouth appearance and manners. When she falls in love, she falls in love very intensely, and although she may have had all manner of flirtations, she generally clings to the one true passion, and is not uncommonly found dying of a broken heart at the end of the novel. Perhaps the one merit about this kind of fiction, when it is really honest and at its best, is that it recognises the fact that women are not a distinct angelic order of beings, but that they have their strong passions and even their coarse desires like men. Such advantage as there may be in setting this fact plainly before the world, on the authority of writers who are women themselves, the school may claim to have. It is not a high, or refined, or noble, or in any way commendable school of fiction, but at its best it is sincere. At its worst—and it very soon reached its worst—it may be described as insufferable.

The fiction of this later period is, like the poetry, inferior to that of the period which we had to consider in our former survey. It has more names, but not such great names. It would almost seem as if the

present school of fiction is, to borrow a phrase from French politics, exhausting its mandate. The sensation novel has had its day, and its day was but an episode, an interruption. Realism has now well-nigh done all it can. Its close details, its trivial round of common cares and ambitions, its petty trials and easy loves, seem now at last to have spent their attractive power, and to urge with their fading breath the need of some new departure for the novelist. Perhaps the one common want in the more modern novel may suggest the new source of supply. Perhaps, in order to give a fresh life to our fiction, it will have to be dipped once again in the old holy well of romance.

THE END.

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Spottiswoode & Co. Ltd., Printers, New-street Square, London.